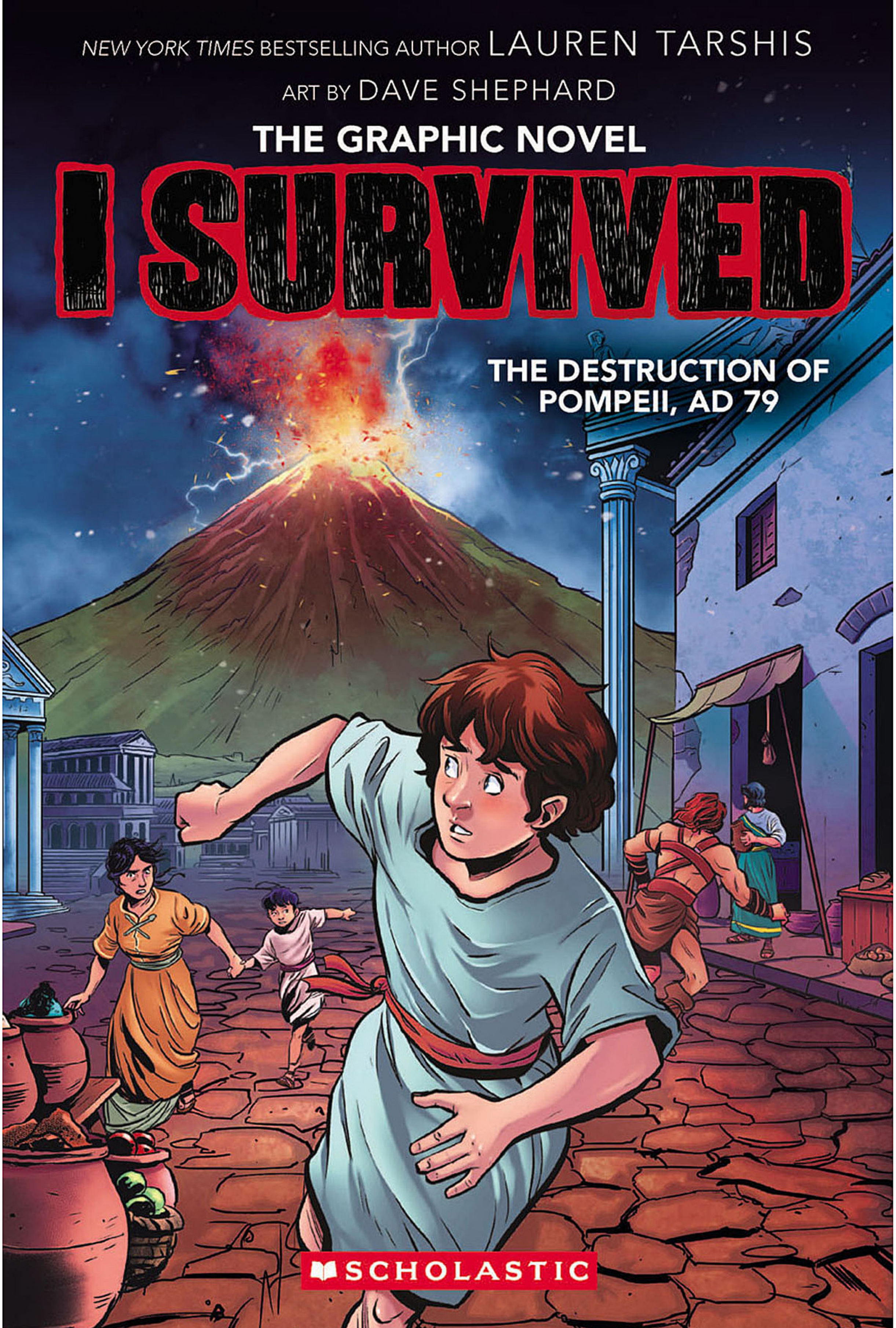
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR LAUREN TARSHIS

ART BY DAVE SHEPHARD

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

I SURVIVED

THE DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII, AD 79



SCHOLASTIC

I SURVIVED

THE DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII, AD 79

TEXT COPYRIGHT © 2024, 2014 BY DREYFUSS TARSHIS MEDIA INC.
ILLUSTRATIONS COPYRIGHT © 2024 BY DREYFUSS TARSHIS MEDIA INC.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PUBLISHED BY GRAPHIX, AN IMPRINT OF SCHOLASTIC INC., *PUBLISHERS SINCE 1920.* SCHOLASTIC, GRAPHIX, AND ASSOCIATED LOGOS ARE TRADEMARKS AND/OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF SCHOLASTIC INC.

THE PUBLISHER DOES NOT HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER AND DOES NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR AUTHOR OR THIRD-PARTY WEBSITES OR THEIR CONTENT.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND PAN-AMERICAN COPYRIGHT CONVENTIONS. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED, TRANSMITTED, DOWNLOADED, DECOMPILED, REVERSE ENGINEERED, OR STORED IN OR INTRODUCED INTO ANY INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM, IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS, WHETHER ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL, NOW KNOWN OR HEREAFTER INVENTED, WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER. FOR INFORMATION REGARDING PERMISSION, WRITE TO SCHOLASTIC INC., ATTENTION: PERMISSIONS DEPARTMENT, 557 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY 10012.

PHOTOS ©: 151 TOP: THE PRINT COLLECTOR/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 151 CENTER: CHRIS HELLIER/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 151 BOTTOM: PRISMA ARCHIVO/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 152 TOP LEFT: DEA/A. DAGLI ORTI/DEAGOSTINI/GETTY IMAGES; 152 TOP RIGHT: ADAM EASTLAND/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 152 CENTER: TONY LILLEY/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 152 BOTTOM: SIR FRANCIS CANKER PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES; 153 TOP: CCI/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES; 153 CENTER: NORTH WIND PICTURE ARCHIVES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 153 BOTTOM: GLASSHOUSE IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 154 TOP: ZU_09/GETTY IMAGES; 154 CENTER: A. DAGLI ORTI/© NPL - DEA PICTURE LIBRARY/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES; 154 BOTTOM: STEFANO RAVERA/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 155 TOP: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; 155 CENTER: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; 155 BOTTOM-TOP LEFT: SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES; 155 BOTTOM-TOP RIGHT: DEAGOSTINI/GETTY IMAGES; 155 BOTTOM-BOTTOM LEFT: DEA / A. DAGLI ORTI/DE AGOSTINI/GETTY IMAGES; 155 BOTTOM-BOTTOM RIGHT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; 156 TOP: BUENA VISTA IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES; 156 CENTER: DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES; 156 BOTTOM: ART KOWALSKY/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

SPECIAL THANKS TO RAY LAURENCE

WHILE INSPIRED BY REAL EVENTS AND HISTORICAL CHARACTERS, THIS IS A WORK OF FICTION AND DOES NOT CLAIM TO BE HISTORICALLY ACCURATE OR TO PORTRAY FACTUAL EVENTS OR RELATIONSHIPS. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT REFERENCES TO ACTUAL PERSONS, LIVING OR DEAD, BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, EVENTS, OR LOCALES MAY NOT BE FACTUALLY ACCURATE, BUT RATHER FICTIONALIZED BY THE AUTHOR.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CONTROL NUMBER AVAILABLE
E-ISBN 978-1-338-88309-1

FIRST EDITION, JULY 2024
EDITED BY BECKY HERRICK
LETTERING BY JANICE CHIANG
INKS BY DAVE SHEPHARD
COLORS BY JUANMA AGUILERA
BOOK DESIGN BY KATIE FITCH AND BECKY JAMES
CREATIVE DIRECTOR: YAFFA JASKOLL

NOVEMBER AD 79
The day of the eruption
1:00 p.m.
The City of Pompeii
The Roman Empire

BOOM

KRAKA-KRAKA-BOOM

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
I SHOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE NEAR THIS CITY.
BOOM
KRAKA
BOOM

MOUNT VESUVIUS HAD ALWAYS BEEN PEACEFUL.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

BUT ANY MOMENT NOW, A DEADLY CLOUD WILL RUSH DOWN THE MOUNTAIN...

AND DESTROY EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!

WE'VE ANGERED THE GODS!

HELP US!

I HAVE TO GET OUT OF POMPEII—

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

BUT HOW?

KRAKAKOW

I SURVIVED

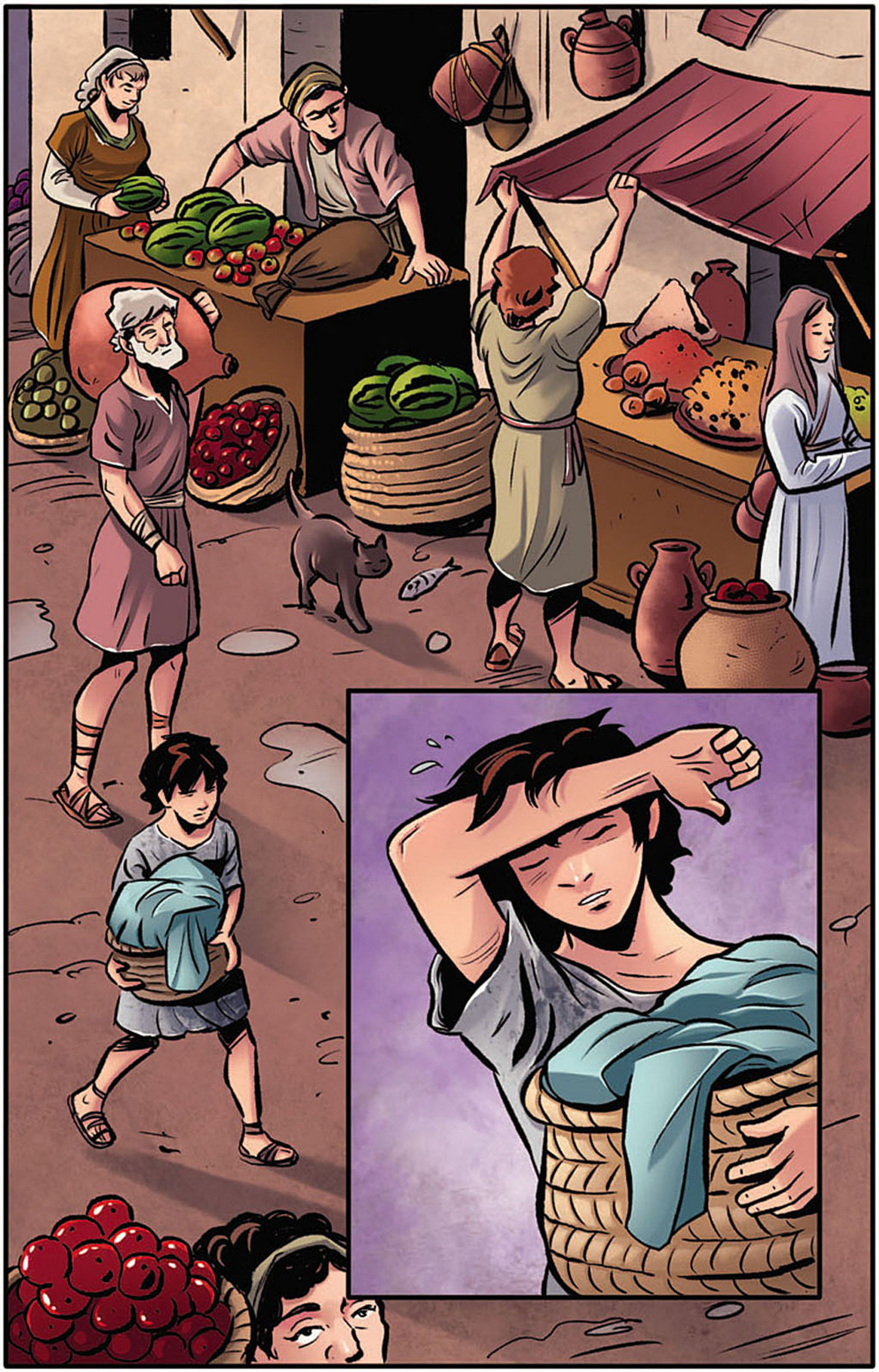
THE DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII, AD 79

BASED ON THE NOVEL IN THE *NEW YORK TIMES*
BESTSELLING SERIES BY LAUREN TARSHIS

ADAPTED BY GEORGIA BALL
WITH INKS BY DAVE SHEPHARD
COLORS BY JUANMA AGUILERA

graphix
AN IMPRINT OF
SCHOLASTIC

The afternoon before the eruption . . . Decumanus Maximus (the main street), Pompeii



ZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

I SAY HELLO TO THE DEADLY REPTILE.

SALVE, LITTLE ONE.

I WISH I HAD A BASKET TO HIDE IN RIGHT NOW.

MY TUNIC IS SOAKED WITH SWEAT, BUT I CAN'T REST.

MY MASTER, FESTUS JULIUS, IS EXPECTING GUESTS FROM ROME.

FRIENDS OF THE EMPEROR. IMPORTANT MEN.

THAT MEANS WORK FOR ME AND THE OTHER SLAVES.

EVEN MORE THAN USUAL.

WE'VE BEEN SCRUBBING THE VILLA FLOORS UNTIL THE MOSAICS SHINE LIKE DIAMONDS.

THE LOCAL GUESTS WILL ARRIVE IN LITTERS AND SEDAN CHAIRS . . .

GLITTERING JEWELS ON EVERY FINGER.

THEY WILL FEAST ON WILD BOAR, ROASTED FLAMINGOS . . .

AND HONEY-BAKED MICE STUFFED WITH RAISINS AND DATES.

THEY'LL GORGE THEMSELVES UNTIL THEY THROW UP, THEN EAT SOME MORE.

TOMORROW, FESTUS WILL TAKE THEM TO SEE THE GLADIATORS AT POMPEII'S AMPHITHEATER.

THEY'LL CHEER AS THE GLADIATORS FIGHT TO THE DEATH WITH SWORDS AND SPEARS.

CYCLOPS IS THEIR CHAMPION.

HE LOST AN EYE IN BATTLE, SO THEY NAMED HIM AFTER A GIANT ONE-EYED MONSTER IN THE OLD GREEK TALES.

HE'S A SLAVE, FORCED TO FIGHT. BUT HE'S ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES.

HE'S STILL ALIVE AFTER MANY BATTLES.

MAYBE THE GODS ARE WATCHING OVER HIM.

JUST THINKING ABOUT THOSE TOURNAMENTS MAKES ME SHAKE ALL OVER—

— WAIT. THAT'S NOT ME . . .

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

THE EARTH IS SHAKING!

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

RUMBLE

THESE TREMORS HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR WEEKS.

THIS ONE IS STRONGER THAN MOST.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

THE QUAKES HAVE CRACKED THE WALLS OF MY MASTER'S VILLA.

THEY'RE USUALLY OVER IN SECONDS.

IF ONLY I WERE AS BRAVE AND POWERFUL AS APOLLO, THEN I WOULDN'T BE AFRAID.

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE RUMBLE
RUMBLE
:GASP:

I BRACE MYSELF FOR THE CRUSHING BLOW...

RUMBLERUMBLERUMBLE

RUMBLE

CRASH

THANK THE GODS!

POOR APOLLO.

AT LEAST THE EARTH STOPPED SHAKING.

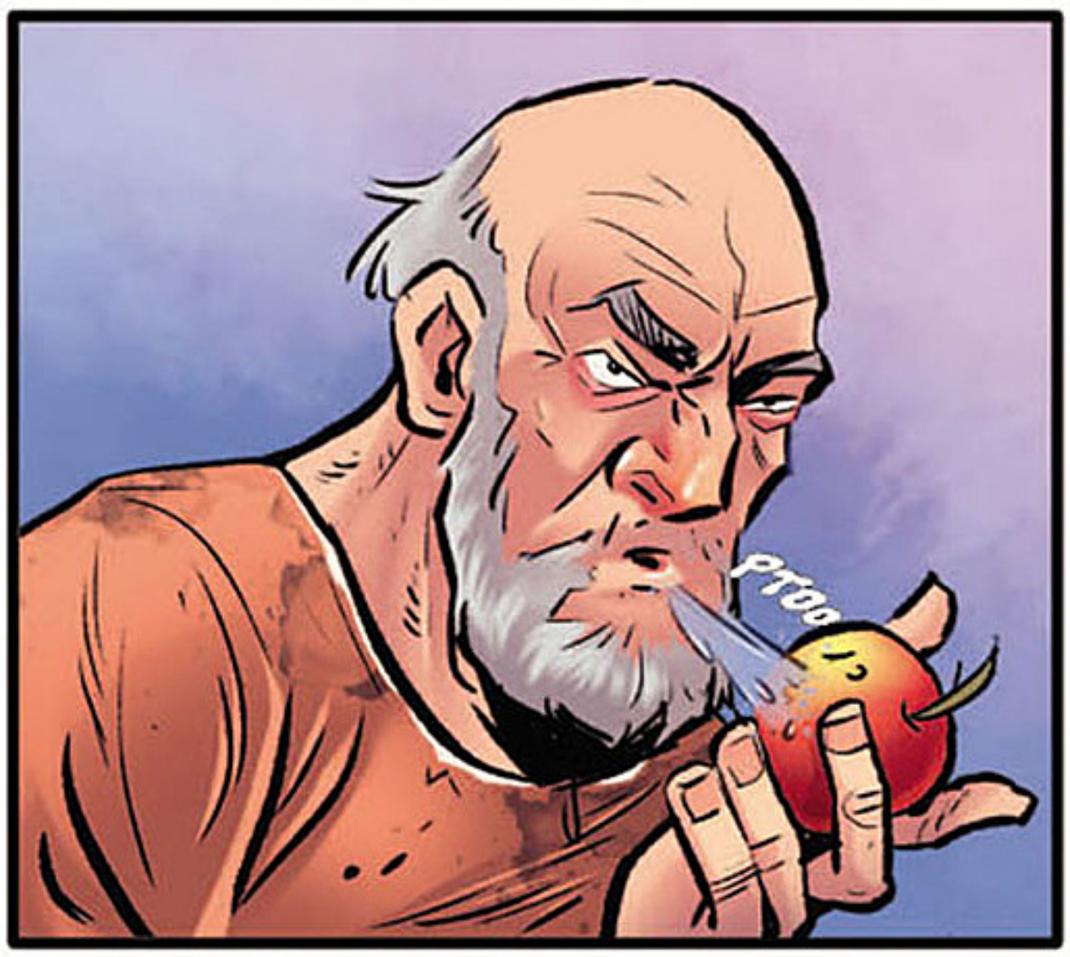
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT STEALING THOSE APPLES.

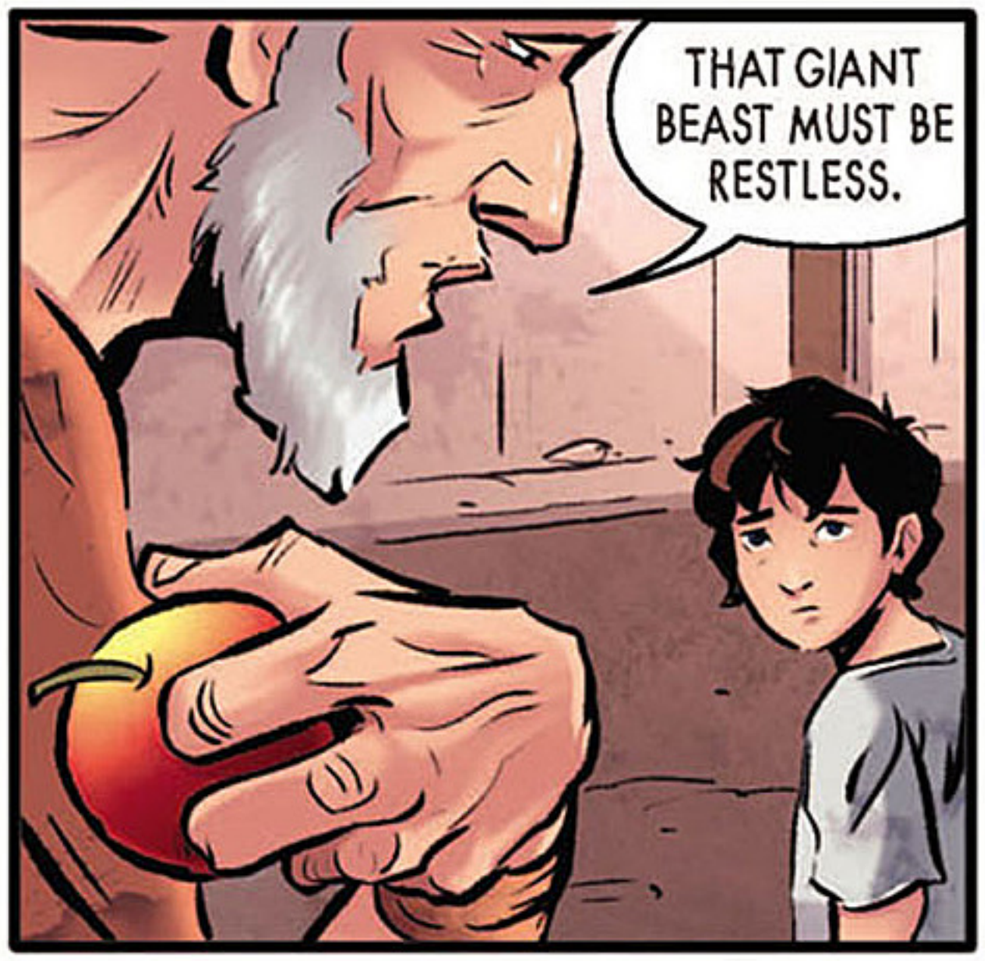
I WON'T.

BETTER NOT.

I SHOULD TELL HIM ABOUT THAT OTHER APPLE, BUT I'M STARVING.

FESTUS ONLY FEEDS HIS SLAVES OLD CHEESE AND WATERY GRUEL.


PTOO


THAT GIANT BEAST MUST BE RESTLESS.

GIANT BEAST?
YES, YES. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT'S WHY THE EARTH IS SHAKING.

THERE'S A GREAT BEAST LIVING UNDER THE MOUNTAIN.

EVERY FEW YEARS IT WAKES UP AND THE CITY SHAKES.

THEN IT GOES TO SLEEP AGAIN.

SO MUCH SHAKING THIS TIME. THE BEAST MUST BE ANGRY . . .

TALK OF MONSTERS AND MAGIC ALWAYS MADE MY FATHER SHAKE HIS HEAD.

FATHER. *TATA.*

IT'S NATURAL FOR PEOPLE TO BLAME THE GODS FOR THINGS THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.

BUT SCIENCE ALWAYS HOLDS THE ANSWER . . .

"IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH."

PRAY TO THE GODS THAT THE BEAST WILL GO TO SLEEP AGAIN!

IT ISN'T RIGHT FOR A SLAVE TO CORRECT THE OPINION OF A FREE CITIZEN.

BETTER SAY NOTHING.

BEG THE GODS TO HAVE MERCY ON US . . .

I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE TREMORS, BUT NO ONE ELSE SEEMS TO BE.

I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE VILLA.

FESTUS WILL BEAT ME IF I'M LATE, EVEN IF THERE *IS* A MONSTER.

=SIGH=

SCAT, THIEF!

I'M NOT GOING TO STEAL ANYTHING.

THAT'S WHAT *YOU* SAY.

WHAT DO YOU WANT, THEN?

HERE.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

MARCUS.

HELP ME UP, BOY.

KIND, YOUNG MARCUS. BE CAREFUL.

I HAVE SEEN THE SIGNS.

A TERRIBLE DOOM IS COMING FOR THE PEOPLE OF POMPEII.

WHEN HOPE IS LOST . . .

FOLLOW THE HAND OF MERCURY.

THE MESSENGER GOD WITH WINGS ON HIS SANDALS?

DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

UH . . . I UNDERSTAND.

THE END IS COMING . . .

THE WORLD WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS!

REMEMBER . . .

WHO WAS THAT BEGGAR WOMAN?

A WITCH WHO CAN PREDICT THE FUTURE?

A PRIESTESS WHO CAN HEAR THE WHISPERS OF THE GODS?

OR IS SHE JUST A CONFUSED OLD WOMAN?

MY FATHER WOULD KNOW.

IF ONLY TATA WERE HERE WITH ME NOW!

I CAN PICTURE HIM SO CLEARLY . . .

TATA WAS BORN IN GERMANIA, A KINGDOM NORTH OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

ROMAN INVADERS SOLD HIM INTO SLAVERY WHEN HE WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

BUT TATA WAS LUCKY.

HE WAS BOUGHT BY A SCIENTIST NAMED LINUS SELIUS.

HE TOOK TATA ON HIS TRAVELS AND TAUGHT HIM TO READ AND WRITE AND ALL ABOUT THE NATURAL WORLD.

LATER, TATA MARRIED MY MOTHER.

SHE DIED WHEN I WAS A BABY.

I GREW UP IN LINUS'S LIBRARY, ONE OF THE FINEST IN ROME.

TATA WOULD READ ME THE LATEST THEORIES ABOUT NATURE AND DRAG ME ON LONG WALKS IN THE HILLS OUTSIDE OF ROME.

BUT WHAT I REALLY LOVED WERE THE GREEK STORIES WRITTEN CENTURIES AGO . . .

WHO WAS THE GREATEST HERO, TATA? HERCULES OR ULYSSES?

WELL . . . HERCULES WAS THE SON OF JUPITER. HE WAS BRAVE AND STRONG.

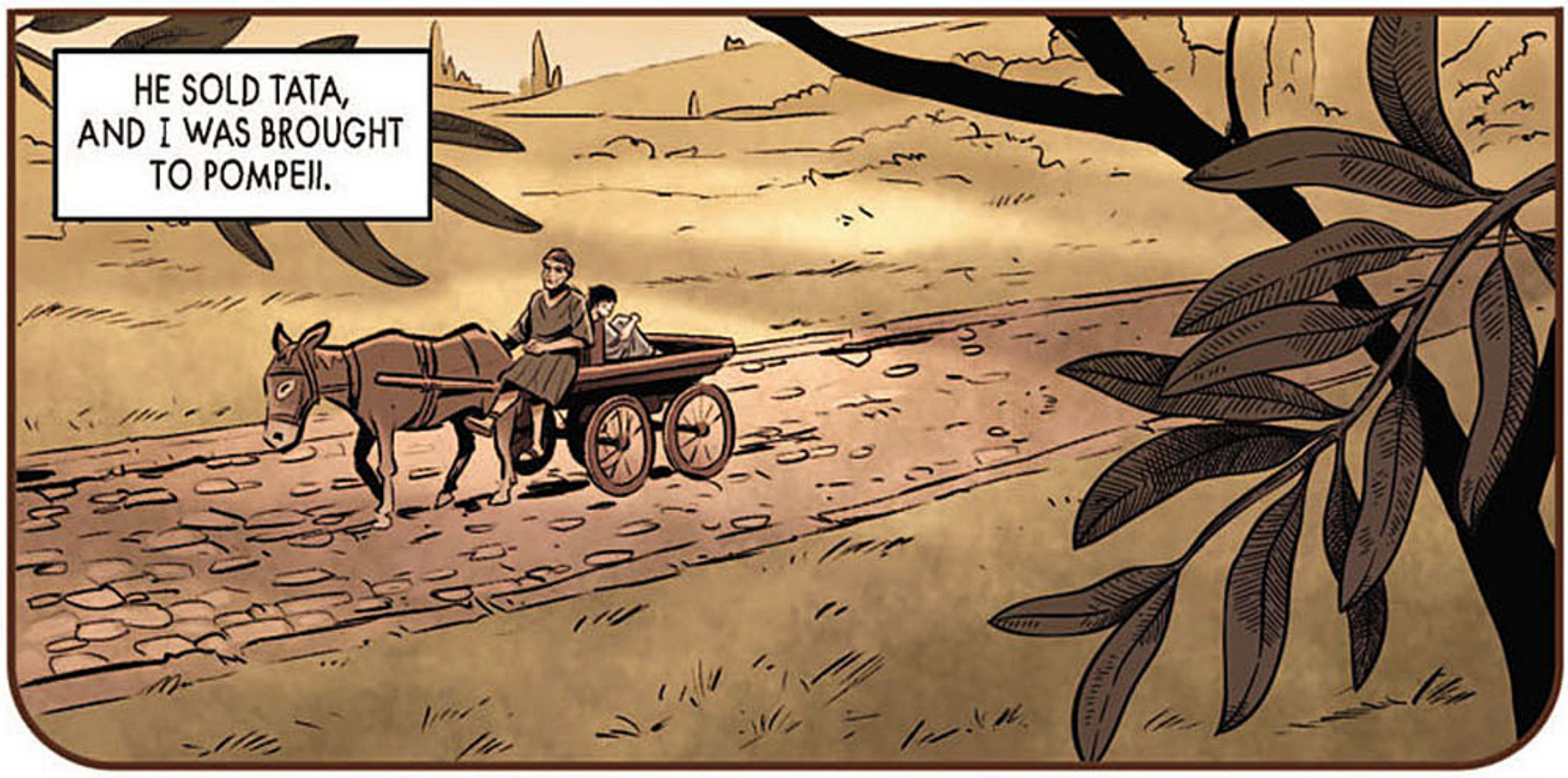
BUT ULYSSES WAS A POWERFUL LEADER.

HE WON THE TROJAN WAR BY USING HIS HEAD— NOT HIS MUSCLES ALONE.

BUT TWO MONTHS AGO, LINUS SELIUS DIED FROM A FEVER . . .

AND MY WORLD FELL APART.

WE BECAME THE PROPERTY OF LINUS'S NEPHEW . . .
THE BRUTAL FESTUS JULIUS.


HE SOLD TATA, AND I WAS BROUGHT TO POMPEII.

IT TOOK FIVE DAYS TO GET HERE FROM ROME.

NOW I'M ONE OF TEN SLAVES IN FESTUS'S GRAND VILLA.

WHERE IS TATA?

HE COULD BE ANYWHERE IN THE VAST ROMAN EMPIRE BY NOW . . .

FROM THE CLIFFS OF BRITANNIA TO THE AFRICAN DESERT.

WHAT'S THAT MUSIC?

THE GLADIATOR PARADE!

NOW WE'LL SEE THE FIGHTERS WHO WILL BE IN THE ARENA TOMORROW.

I CAN'T GET THROUGH.

TA-TA-TA-TAAAAAAAAAAAAA

THERE'S THE *LANISTA*—

—THE MAN WHO OWNS AND TRAINS THE GLADIATORS.

NO RESPECTABLE MAN WOULD TOUCH THAT DIRTY BUSINESS—

—GETTING RICH OFF THE BLOOD OF OTHER MEN.

THERE HE IS!

CYCLOPS!

CYCLOPS, LOOK THIS WAY!

I'VE HEARD TERRIFYING STORIES ABOUT THIS GLADIATOR.

THEY SAY HE CAN SNAP A MAN'S NECK WITH ONE HAND.

LOOK THERE, BOY . . .

POOR SOULS.

THEY ARE THE DOOMED GLADIATORS WHO WILL FIGHT CYCLOPS TOMORROW.

BY TOMORROW AFTERNOON . . .

THEY WILL ALL BE DEAD.

WAIT...

MOVE!

CAN IT BE?

TATA!

MOVE! MOVE NOW!

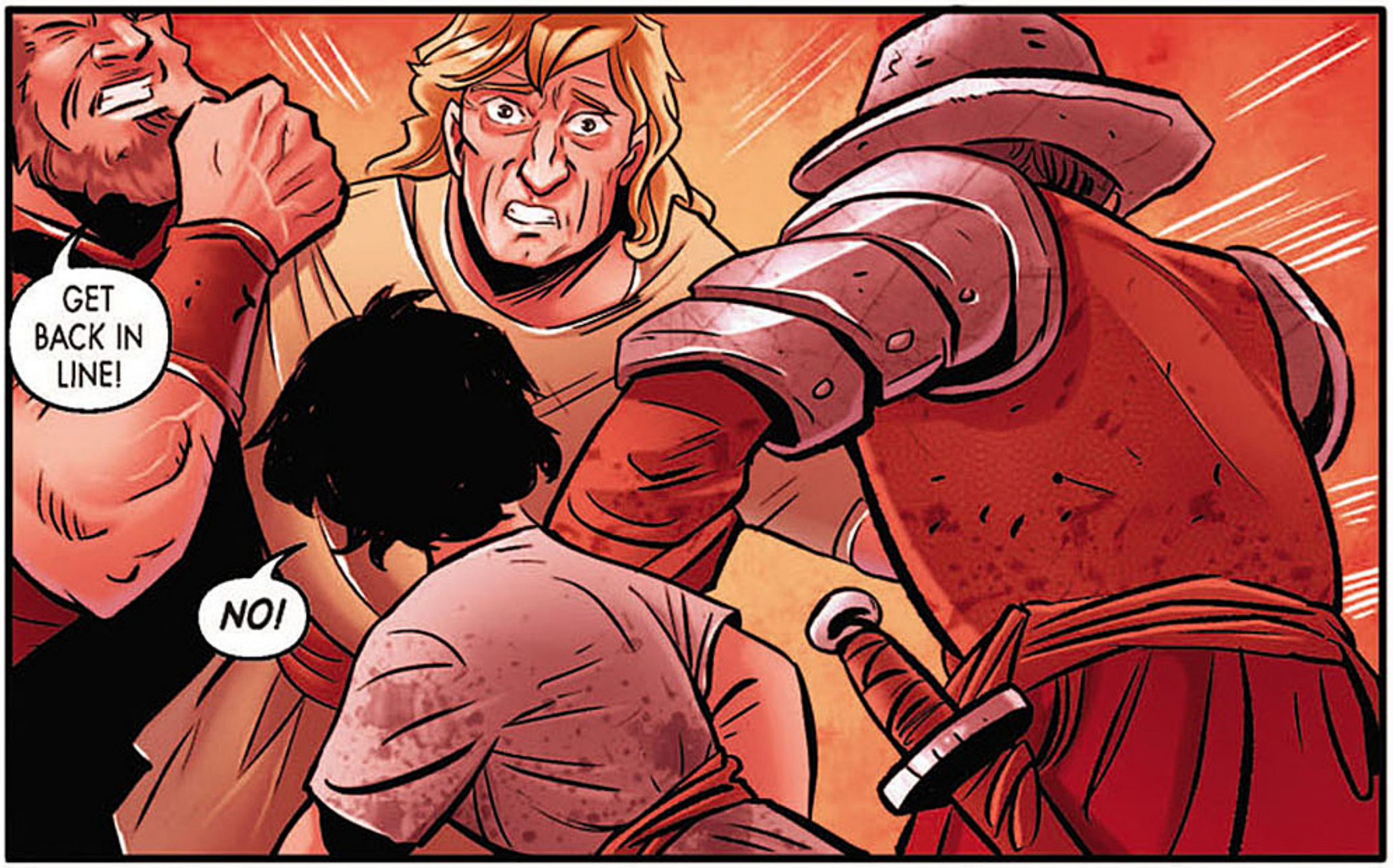
IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!

MARCUS, HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

FESTUS BROUGHT ME TO POMPEII AFTER YOU WERE SOLD!

BUT, TATA! YOU'RE A GLADIATOR?

HOW...? WHY...?


GET BACK IN LINE!
NO!

WHAT'S THIS?

HOW DARE YOU STOP MY PARADE!

HAVE MERCY!

THIS IS MY *SON!*

MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO JOIN YOUR FATHER IN THE ARENA?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

A FATHER AND SON AGAINST CYCLOPS?

YES! BRING HIM!

GIVE US A SHOW!

OR MAYBE YOU SHOULD FIGHT EACH OTHER?

RUN, MARCUS! GO!

I BEG YOU!

PLEASE LET MY FATHER GO!

SHING

EVER WONDER HOW CYCLOPS LOST HIS EYE?

NO!

RUN!

TRIP

THWACK

I'LL NEVER SEE TATA AGAIN!

THE HOPE OF FINDING HIM HAD BEEN KEEPING ME GOING.

WHAT WILL I DO NOW?

THE EYES OF FESTUS'S OTHER SLAVES ARE DEAD, LIKE STATUES.

WILL THAT BE MY FUTURE?

THE HEROES FROM MY FAVORITE STORIES HAD HOPELESS MOMENTS TOO.

LIKE ULYSSES . . .

LOST AT SEA FOR TEN YEARS ON HIS WAY HOME FROM TROY.

OR HERCULES FIGHTING A BLOODTHIRSTY LION.

ROOOARRR

THEY KNEW TERROR AND DESPAIR.

BUT THEIR STORIES DIDN'T END IN DEFEAT.

I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO.

I WILL TRY TO SAVE TATA . . .

EVEN IF IT KILLS ME.

I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.

WHEN THE PARADE REACHES THE GLADIATOR BARRACKS, THEY'LL LOCK TATA IN A CELL.

THEY'LL SHACKLE HIS ARMS AND LEGS UNTIL IT'S TIME TO FIGHT.

ONCE TATA IS IN THE BARRACKS, IT WILL BE TOO LATE.

I HAVE TO STEAL TATA AWAY FROM THE PARADE.

BUT HOW?

WHAT WOULD THE HEROES DO?

I'M NOT STRONG LIKE HERCULES. WHAT ABOUT ULYSSES?

ULYSSES WAS CUNNING.

AT A LOW POINT IN THE TROJAN WAR, THE GREEK ARMIES HAD TROY SURROUNDED—

BUT THEY COULDN'T BREAK THROUGH THE CITY WALLS.

THEY HAVE THOUSANDS OF ARCHERS.

WE CAN'T GET CLOSE.

"WE'LL NEVER GET PAST THOSE WALLS."

HIS GENERALS WERE READY TO GIVE UP, BUT NOT ULYSSES.

WE HAVE COME TOO FAR AND LOST TOO MANY MEN TO LOSE THIS WAR NOW.

THERE MUST BE A WAY. IF WE CAN'T *FORCE* OUR WAY INSIDE—

PERHAPS THEY WILL INVITE US IN.

ULYSSES ASKED HIS ENGINEER TO BUILD A GIANT HORSE.

THE MEN FOLLOWED ULYSSES'S ORDERS . . .

HA! THEY'RE GIVING UP. SOME OF THEIR BOATS ARE ALREADY GONE.

THAT HORSE MUST BE AN OFFERING TO THE GODS FOR A SAFE JOURNEY HOME.

ULYSSES DEDICATED THE HORSE TO THE GODDESS MINERVA.

BUT THE HORSE WAS MORE THAN A GIFT TO THE GODS.

IT WAS A TRAP.

IN THE MORNING, ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF THE GREEKS WAS A GIANT WOODEN HORSE—

—AND THE TROJANS FOOLISHLY PULLED IT INTO THE CITY.

AS THE SHIPS SAILED BACK AT MIDNIGHT, ULYSSES AND HIS MEN SLIPPED OUT OF THE HORSE...

AND WON THE WAR.

I CAN BE CUNNING TOO...

I HAVE AN IDEA! I HAVE FESTUS'S LAUNDRY...

I CAN'T BUILD A WOODEN HORSE LIKE THE GREEKS . . .

BUT I CAN PUT ON FESTUS'S DIRTY TOGA AND DISGUISE MYSELF AS A ROMAN CITIZEN.

THIS TOGA STINKS OF WINE AND FESTUS'S SWEAT.

NOW I JUST NEED A WEAPON.

THE SNAKE!

SWISH

STOP HIM! STOP THAT THIEF!

WHAT IF THE LID FLIES OFF? I CAN FEEL THE SNAKE BANGING AROUND . . .

I CAN'T THINK ABOUT THE SNAKE RIGHT NOW.

I'M ALMOST OUT OF TIME!

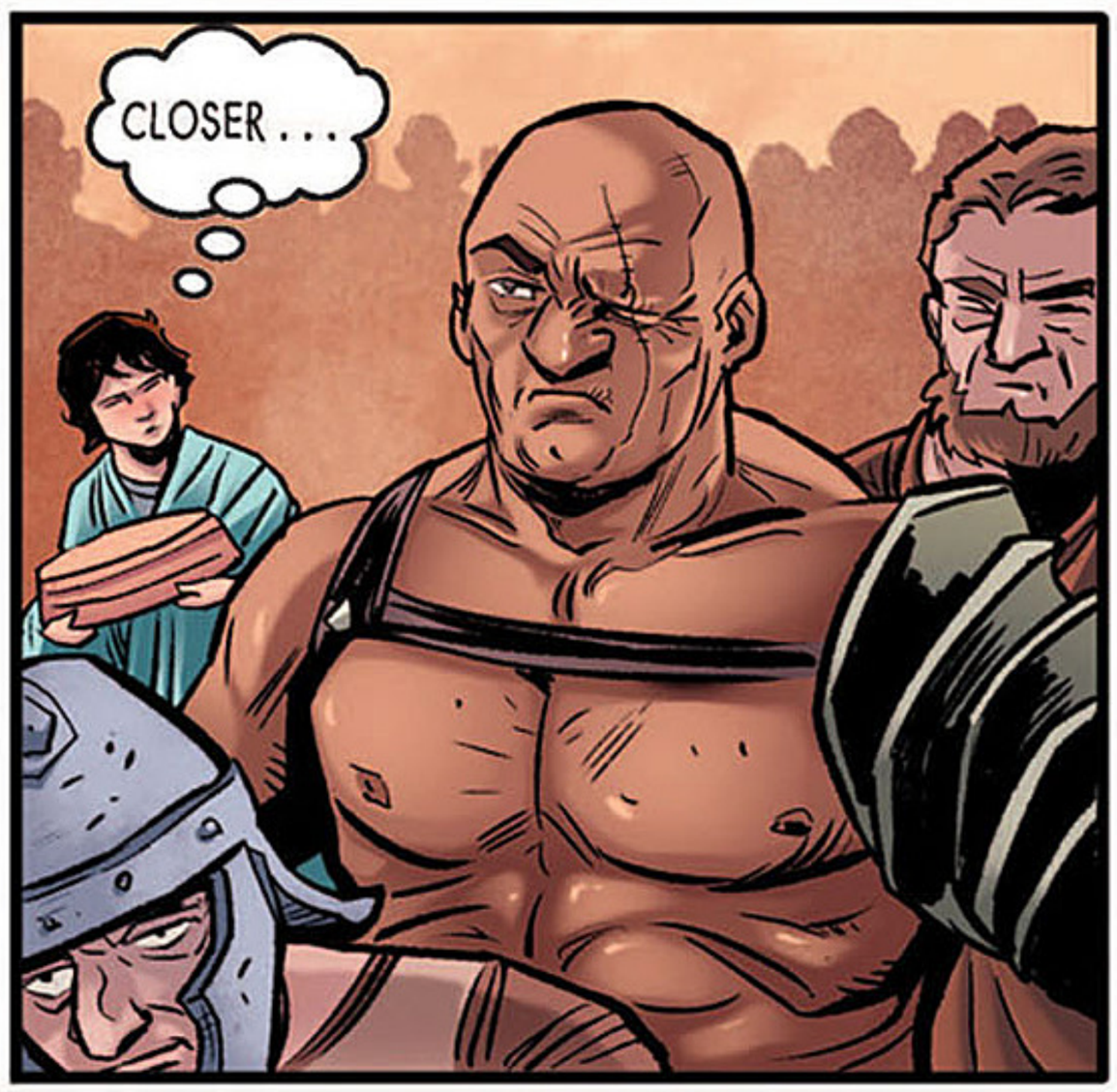
THE DISGUISE IS WORKING!

NO ONE KNOWS I'M JUST A SLAVE.

THE LANISTA IS UNLOCKING THE GATE . . .

HA! BEG THE GODS TO HELP YOU, SLAVE . . .
I HAVE TO GET CLOSER . . .

HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA


CLOSER . . .

CLOSER . . .

STOP HIM!

HISSSSSSSSSSSSSS

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

SWOOOSH

AAAHHHHEEEEEEE

THUD

THUMP

HISSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

RUMBLE

IT'S A CURSE FROM THE GODS!

TATA! IT'S ME!

THIS WAY!

THIS POOR MARE LOOKS A HUNDRED YEARS OLD. CAN SHE STILL RUN?

SHE'LL HAVE TO DO HER BEST. HOLD ON TIGHT!

SWAP

I THINK SHE WANTS TO ESCAPE POMPEII AS BADLY AS WE DO!

IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE FLYING . . .

I IMAGINE I'M SOARING THROUGH THE SKY ON PEGASUS FROM THE OLD TALES.

WE PASS THE CITY GATES!

ECCE!

CA-CLOP CA-CLOP

CA-CLOP CA-CLOP

RRRIP

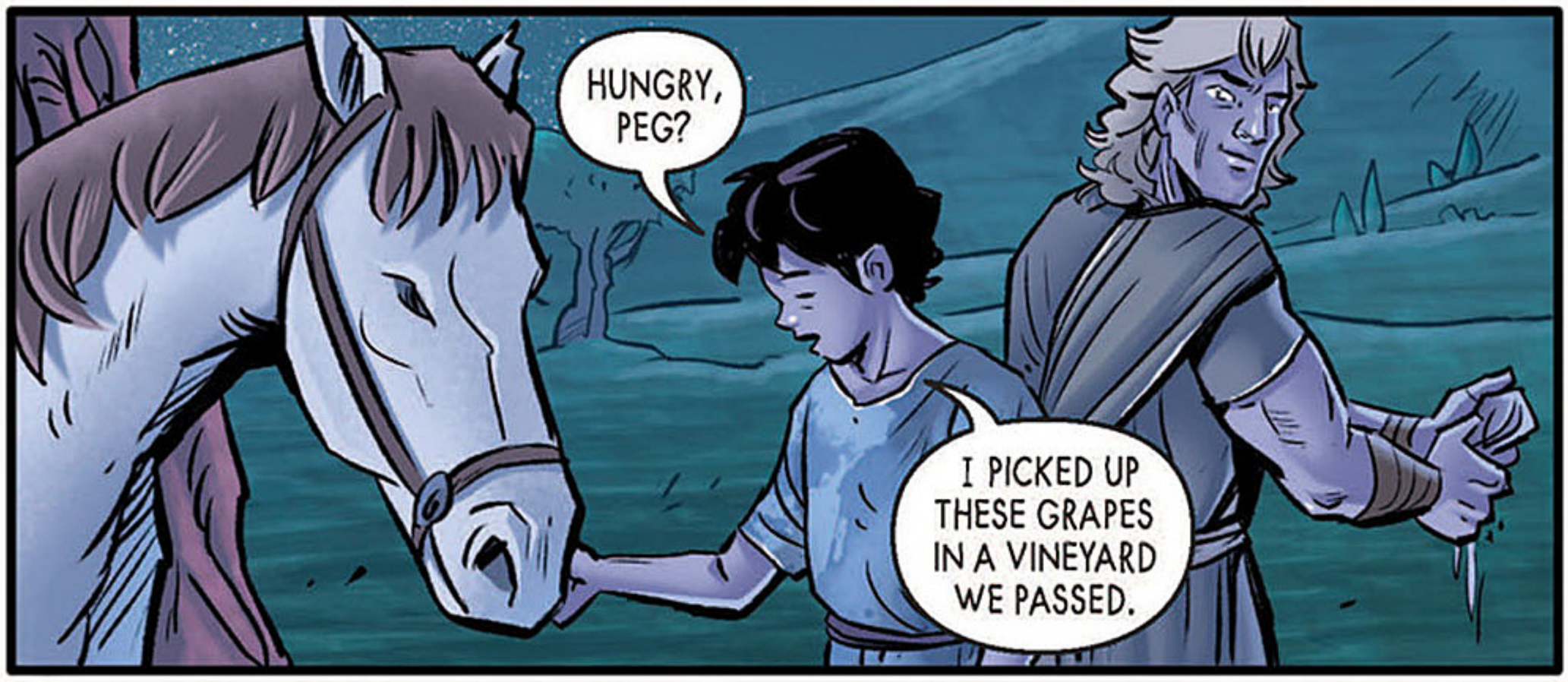
MOUNT VESUVIUS.

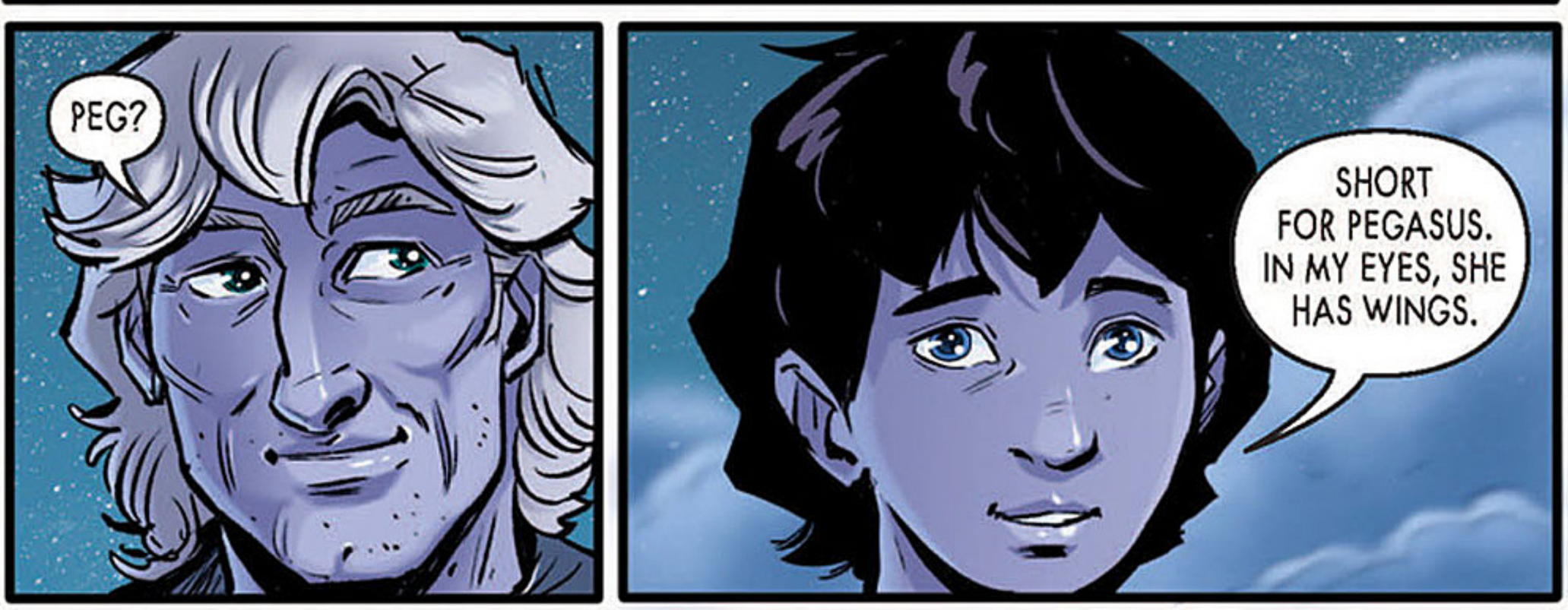
WE'LL STOP HERE FOR NOW.

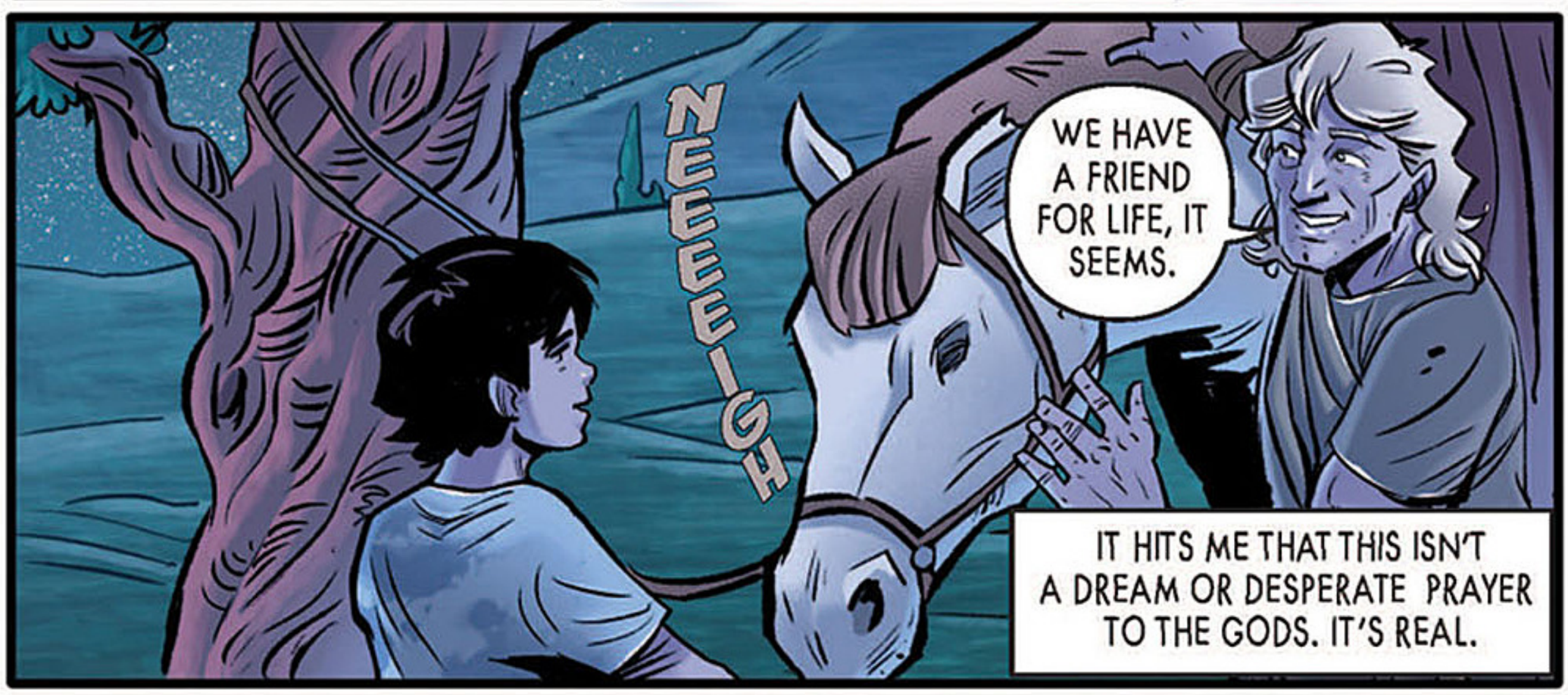
IT FEELS GOOD TO STRETCH MY LEGS!

IT WAS A LONG RIDE TO THE MOUNTAIN.

LUCKILY I FOUND THIS OLD TUNIC DRYING ON A FARMER'S LINE, OR IT WOULD BE A MUCH COLDER NIGHT FOR ME.


HUNGRY, PEG?
I PICKED UP THESE GRAPES IN A VINEYARD WE PASSED.


PEG?
SHORT FOR PEGASUS. IN MY EYES, SHE HAS WINGS.


NEEEEIGH
WE HAVE A FRIEND FOR LIFE, IT SEEMS.
IT HITS ME THAT THIS ISN'T A DREAM OR DESPERATE PRAYER TO THE GODS. IT'S REAL.

TATA AND I ARE TOGETHER AGAIN!

THEY'LL COME AFTER US, WON'T THEY?

THE SLAVE HUNTERS.

FESTUS WILL HIRE THE BEST TRACKERS.

THEY WON'T LOOK FOR US UP HERE.

THE HUNTERS WILL SEARCH POMPEII FIRST.

IT WILL BE DAYS BEFORE THEY COME TO THE MOUNTAIN. AND BY THEN—

—WE'LL BE LONG GONE.

WE'LL GO BACK TO ROME. LINUS'S FRIENDS WILL HELP US.

I NEED TO CONTINUE LINUS'S WORK.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER FESTUS SOLD YOU, TATA?

THAT IS THE PAST NOW.

I *HATE* THAT LANISTA!

AND I HATE FESTUS! I HATE THEM FOR WHAT THEY DID TO YOU.

WE NEED TO GET EVEN!

NO!

NEVER SPEAK LIKE THAT, MARCUS. YOU MUST NEVER LET HATRED TAKE OVER!

THEN YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN FESTUS, AND YOUR HATRED WILL DESTROY YOU.

I'M SORRY, TATA.

THERE IS GOODNESS AND KINDNESS IN THE WORLD, MARCUS. YOU CANNOT FORGET THAT.

TOMORROW OUR NEW LIFE BEGINS.

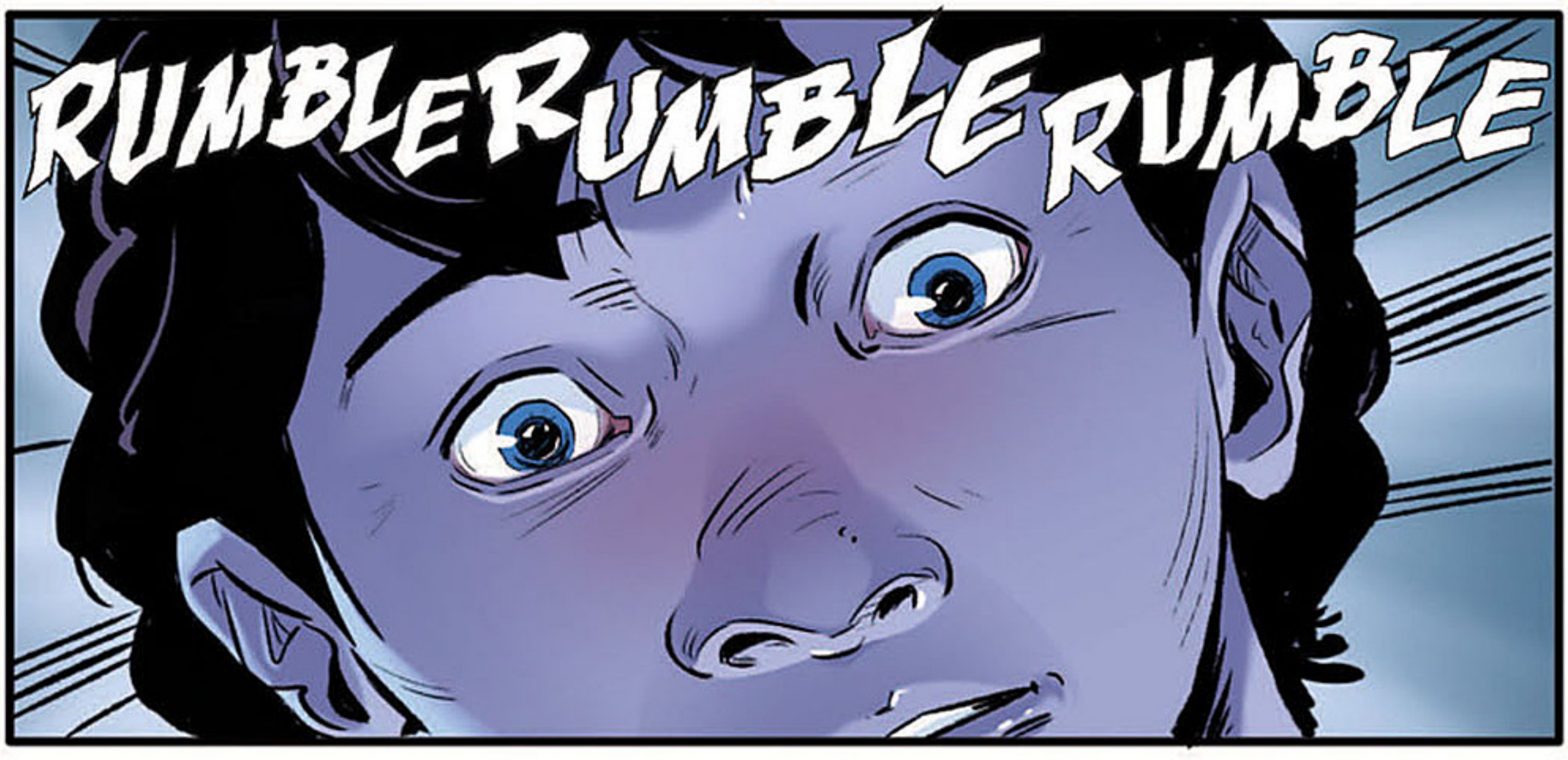
GOODNESS? KINDNESS?

I'VE SEEN NONE OF THAT THESE PAST TWO MONTHS.

IF I HAVE LEARNED ANYTHING, IT'S THAT THE WORLD IS A DARK, EVIL PLACE . . .

WHERE ONLY THE MOST RUTHLESS CAN SURVIVE.

RUMBLERUMBLERUMBLE


RUMBLERUMBLERUMBLE

RESTLESS, TOO, PEG?

SNORT

IT'S OKAY. WE'RE WITH TATA NOW. WE'RE SAFE UP HERE.

FESTUS IS TOO BUSY WITH HIS IMPORTANT GUESTS TO CARE ABOUT ONE ESCAPED SLAVE.

BUT I CAN'T GET RID OF THE FEELING THAT SOMETHING MORE DANGEROUS THAN SLAVE HUNTERS IS ON THIS MOUNTAIN.

NEH-EH-EH

IT'S NEARLY DAWN WHEN I FALL INTO A DREAM . . .

I'M ON A QUEST WITH HERCULES TO KILL A MONSTER.

BE CAREFUL, MARCUS . . .

ONE PUFF OF THE HYDRA'S BREATH CAN KILL YOU IN AN INSTANT.

LOOK OUT!

THAT STENCH . . .

THE POISONOUS HYDRA BREATH! ⇋COUGH⇌

MARCUS!

HERCULES?

MARCUS!

MARCUS!

⇋COUGH⇌ MY CHEST FEELS LIKE IT'S GOING TO EXPLODE!

MARCUS!

MARCUS!

YOU HAVE TO GET UP!

I WAS HAVING A TERRIBLE DREAM...

BUT WHY IS THE AIR STILL POISONOUS?!

SOMETHING IS WRONG. THE AIR HAS GONE BAD!

COUGH COUGH

HACK

WE HAVE TO GO...

COUGH COUGH HACK

COUGH HACK
COUGH COUGH

REEEEEEEEE-
EH-EH-EH-EH-EH

COUGH COUGH COUGH
HACK
COUGH GASP
THE AIR IS CLEAR OUTSIDE THE TREES . . .
COUGH
COUGH
TATA, WHAT *WAS* THAT?
HACK
SULFUR GAS. I SMELLED IT ONCE BEFORE IN AN AFRICAN GOLD MINE.
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
LINUS AND I WERE DEEP UNDERGROUND. WE ALMOST DIDN'T REACH THE SURFACE IN TIME.
SULFUR GAS CAN KILL IN MINUTES. IT'S UNUSUAL TO FIND IT ABOVE THE GROUND.

VERY STRANGE . . . WHAT COULD BE THE CAUSE?

SUDDENLY, TATA IS NOT JUST A SLAVE ON THE RUN.

HE'S A SCIENTIST SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS.

LINUS USED TO INVITE IMPORTANT GUESTS TO HEAR TATA'S IDEAS ON SCIENCE AND NATURE.

COME...

LET'S KEEP GOING UP THE MOUNTAIN.

WE'LL DISCOVER MORE AS WE GET CLOSER TO THE TOP.

COME, PEG.
WHAT IS IT, GIRL?
HUFF
STAMP
STAMP
YOU DON'T WANT TO GO UP THERE, DO YOU?
SNORT
ME NEITHER.
MARCUS!
BUT WE CAN'T LET TATA GO BY HIMSELF.

The day of the eruption
7:00 a.m.
The Mountain Vesuvius

INTERESTING.

HMM . . .

DO YOU NOTICE THE QUIET?

THERE ARE NO BIRDS OR INSECTS ANYWHERE.

I HAVEN'T SEEN A CREATURE SINCE WE REACHED THE MOUNTAIN.

WHERE DID THEY ALL GO?

IT MIGHT BE THAT THERE'S NOT ENOUGH WATER.

PERHAPS THE HEAT DROVE THEM OFF.

MOST OF THE STREAMS HAVE DRIED UP.

THE TRICKLE OF WATER WE DID FIND WAS TOO FOUL TO DRINK.

PEG WOULDN'T TOUCH IT.

SHE'S HARDLY HAD A DRINK SINCE LAST NIGHT.

PEG?

COME ALONG, PEG.

SHE WON'T BUDGE!

NEI-EH-EH-EH-EH-EH

WHAT IS IT, PEG?

THE GRASS IS BROWN AHEAD . . .

I SEE IT.

ALMOST AS IF IT WAS BURNED . . .

GASP!
WHAT IN THE HEAVENS COULD HAVE HAPPENED HERE?

THERE'S NOT A MARK ON HER.

NO BITE MARKS . . . NO WOUNDS.

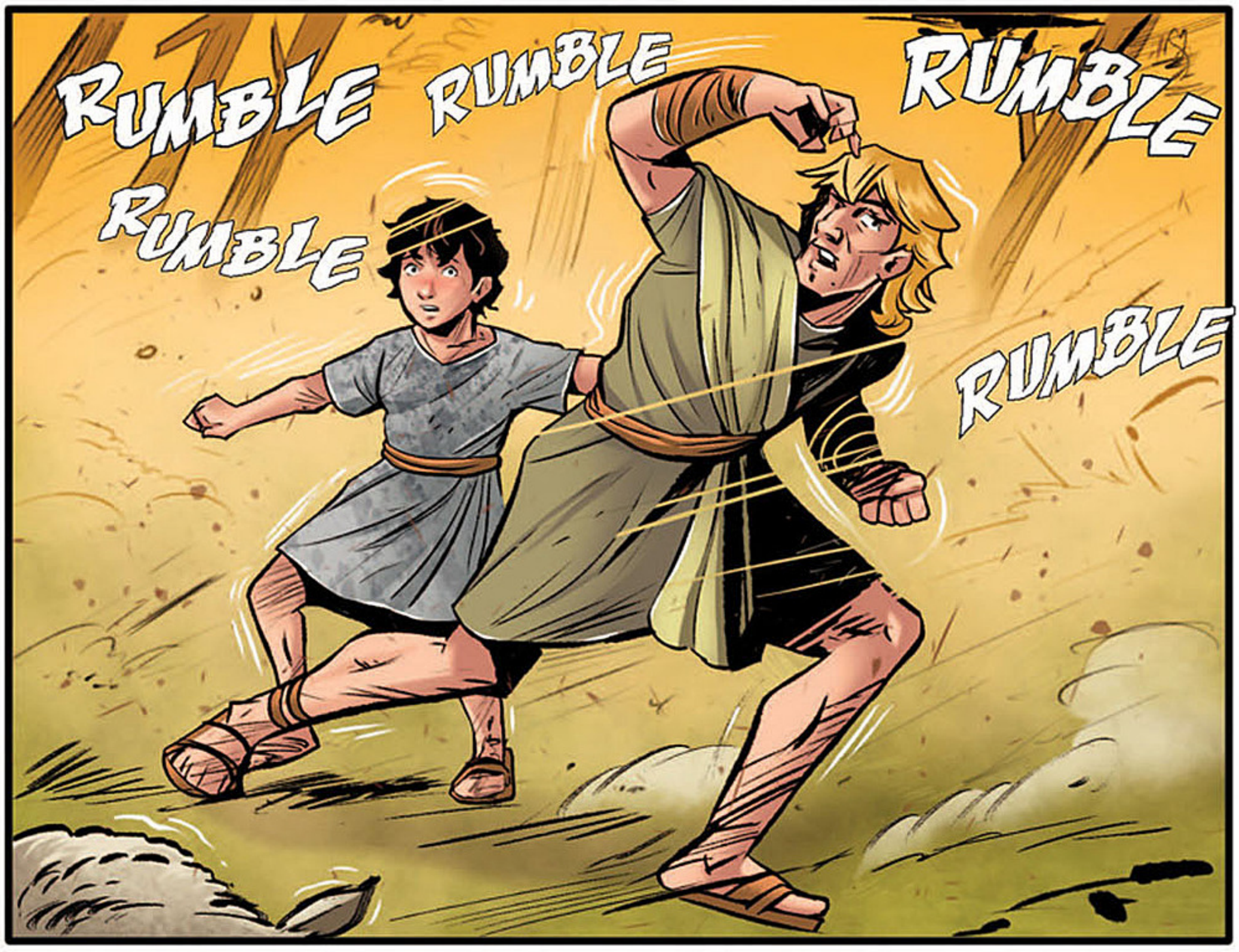
THEY ALL LOOK LIKE THIS. WHAT COULD HAVE KILLED THEM?

I'VE SEEN ENOUGH.

WE MUST LEAVE. NOW.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

RUMBLE RUMBLE


RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

UMPH . . .

CRASH

GASP!

DIZZY . . .

MARCUS!

ARE YOU HURT?

NO . . .

THEN CLIMB ON!

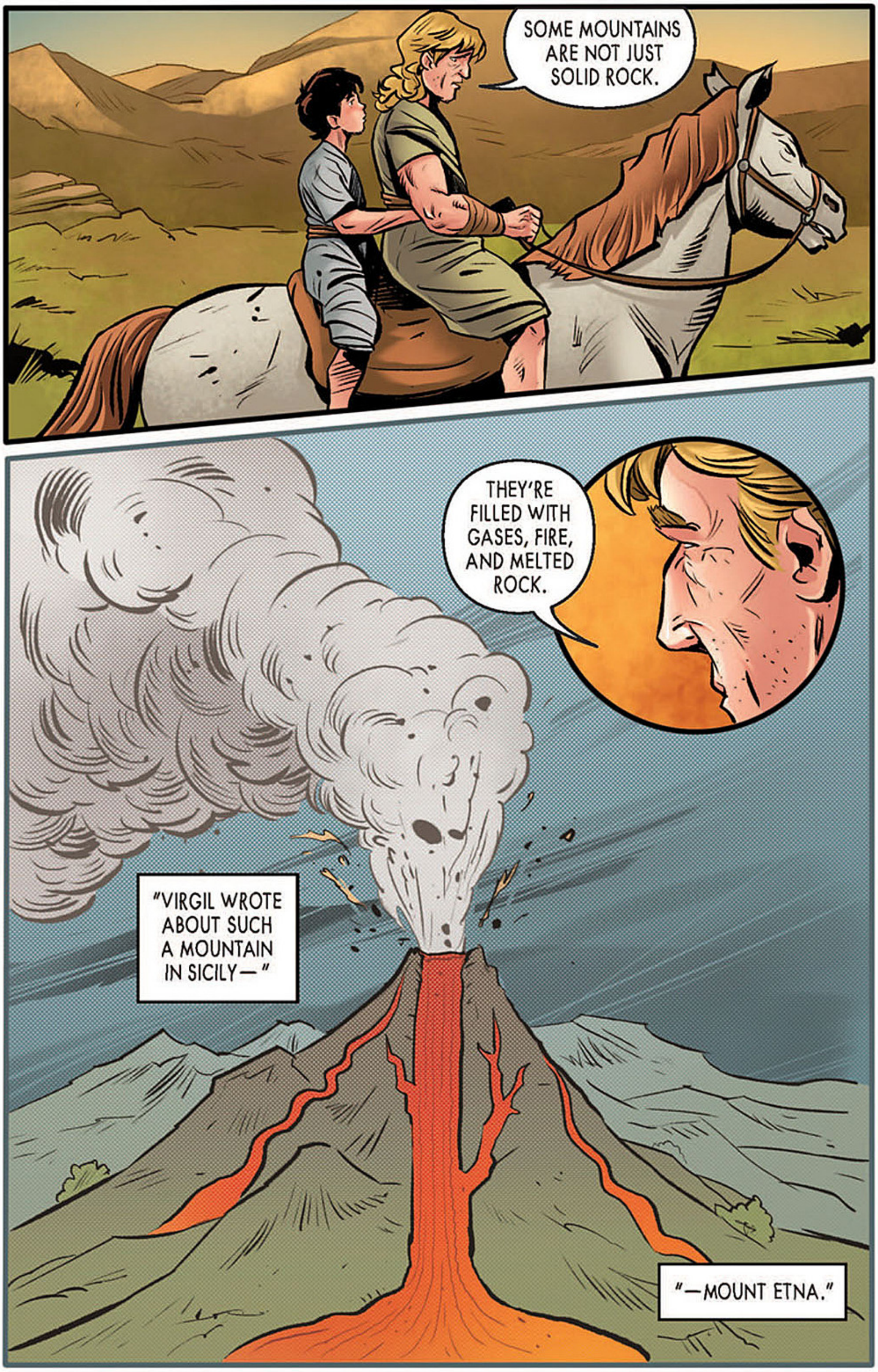
WE MUST GET OFF THIS MOUNTAIN.

A TERRIBLE FIRE IS BURNING UNDER THE MOUNTAIN.

I BELIEVE THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN WILL EXPLODE—AND DESTROY EVERYTHING NEAR!

IT'S LIKE THE BEGGAR WOMAN SAID!

"THE END IS COMING. . . THE WORLD WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS!"


SOME MOUNTAINS ARE NOT JUST SOLID ROCK.
THEY'RE FILLED WITH GASES, FIRE, AND MELTED ROCK.
"VIRGIL WROTE ABOUT SUCH A MOUNTAIN IN SICILY—"
"—MOUNT ETNA."

VIRGIL? THE FAMOUS WRITER FROM ROME?
YES.

HE WROTE ABOUT A TERRIBLE ERUPTION A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
HE SAID FIRE AND ASH SHOT FROM THE MOUNTAIN INTO THE SKY.
DAY TURNED TO NIGHT.
"A CLOUD SWEPT DOWN AND DESTROYED EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH."
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A TALE—
—BUT WHAT WE HAVE SEEN TODAY ON THE MOUNTAIN HAS CHANGED MY MIND.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT'S POSSIBLE!

IT'S STRANGER THAN A TALE, TATA . . .

DEAD SHEEP. FOUL WATER. SULFUR.

IT ALL MAKES SENSE.

WHAT IS HAPPENING ON VESUVIUS TELLS ME THE WORST IS YET TO COME.

WILL POMPEII BE DESTROYED?

I HAVE NO DOUBT.

I MET AN OLD BEGGAR WOMAN YESTERDAY.

"SHE SAID THE STRANGEST THINGS TO ME—"

"—THAT POMPEII IS DOOMED AND WOULD FALL INTO DARKNESS."

I THOUGHT SHE WAS A MADWOMAN, BUT SHE WAS RIGHT!

COULD SHE READ THE FUTURE?

I DON'T BELIEVE IN PROPHETS OR WITCHES.

BUT NATURE SENDS OUT WARNINGS. WHY DO YOU THINK THE ANIMALS FLED?

THEY FELT THE TREMORS, TASTED THE WATER, SMELLED THE SULFUR.

LINUS WOULD SAY THE OLD WOMAN IS KEENLY SENSITIVE—

—OR HAS THE MIND OF A SCIENTIST.

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT OLD WOMAN DISCUSSING SCIENCE WITH YOU, TATA . . .

BUT WHAT YOU SAY COULD BE TRUE.

WHERE ARE WE GOING NOW?

WE NEED TO WARN POMPEII.

THE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

THEY COULD ALL BE KILLED.

BACK TO THAT WRETCHED PLACE? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

BUT YOU DO.

THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THAT CITY.

IT'S OUR DUTY TO WARN THEM.

REMEMBER THE STORIES I USED TO TELL YOU ABOUT HERCULES AND ULYSSES?

DIDN'T THEY RISK THEIR LIVES FOR OTHER PEOPLE?

I'VE READ SO MANY STORIES OF HEROIC WARRIORS.

NOW WHEN I LOOK AT MY FATHER . . .

I FINALLY SEE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HERO.

I UNDERSTAND, TATA.

THE SUN IS HIGH WHEN WE NEAR THE CITY.

WE'LL LEAVE THE HORSE HERE IN THIS OLIVE GROVE.

I'LL BE BACK, PEG.

THE TREMORS ARE GETTING STRONGER.

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

IF WE DON'T COME BACK, BREAK FREE AND RUN AWAY.

UNDERSTAND?

SNORT

RUMBLE

DON'T WAIT FOR US. JUST GO.

WE'LL SPEAK TO THE MAGISTRATES.

THE CITY'S ELECTED LEADERS WILL KNOW HOW TO WARN THE PEOPLE.

I KEEP MY EYES OPEN FOR MEN WHO MIGHT HELP—

—AND MEN WHO MIGHT BE HUNTING US.

STOP, SLAVE.

SIR, I MUST ENTER. I HAVE AN URGENT MESSAGE FOR THE CITY'S LEADERS.

THE CITY IS IN DANGER. WE MUST WARN THE PEOPLE OF POMPEII!

BE GONE.

SIR . . .

THERE WILL SOON BE A TERRIBLE EXPLOSION FROM THE MOUNTAIN. WE—

GO FROM HERE! NOBODY IN THE FORUM WANTS TO TALK TO A FILTHY SLAVE!

TATA, THIS IS HOPELESS . . .

YOU ARE MAKING A MISTAKE!

WE'LL HAVE TO TELL THE PEOPLE OURSELVES.

WE'LL GO TO THE SHOPS AND FOOD STALLS.

MAYBE SOME PEOPLE WILL LISTEN.

I HOPE TATA CAN'T READ MY THOUGHTS.

NO ONE WILL TAKE THE WORD OF A SLAVE.

I'M CYCLOPS!

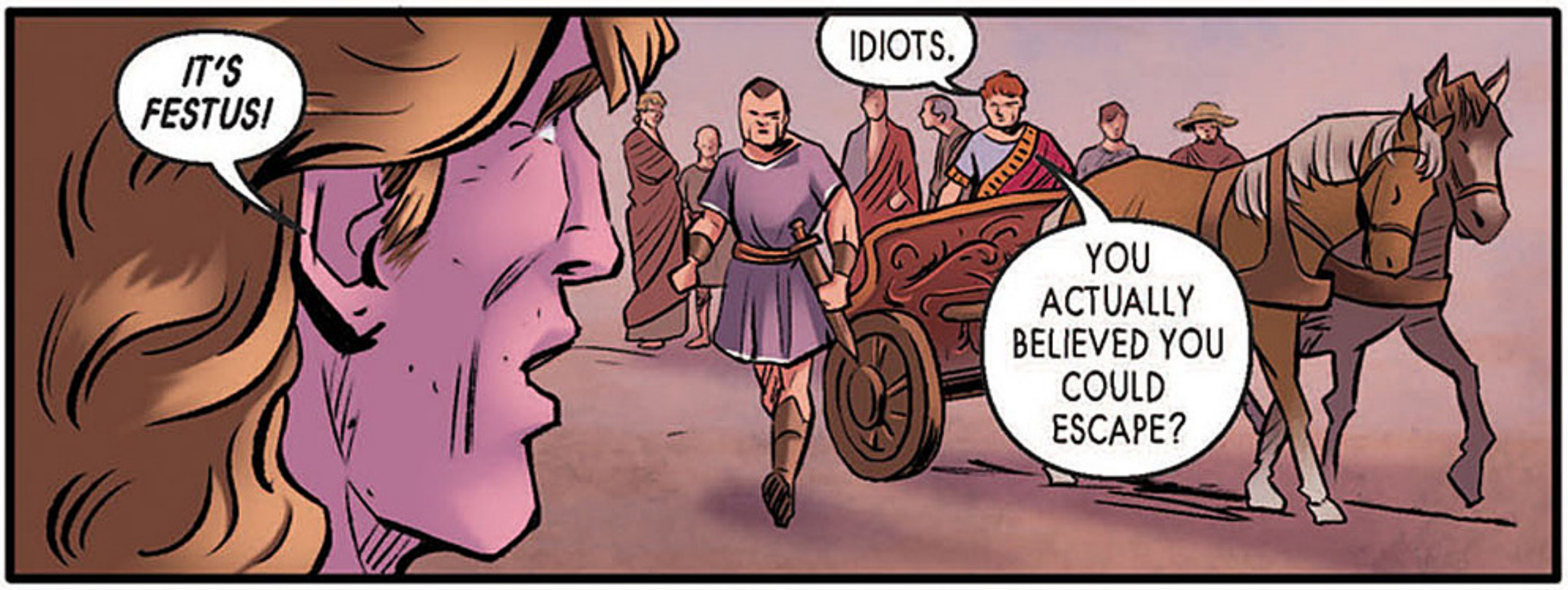
NO, *I* WANT TO BE CYCLOPS . . .

THE GLADIATOR MATCH!

THAT'S WHERE EVERYONE IS GOING.

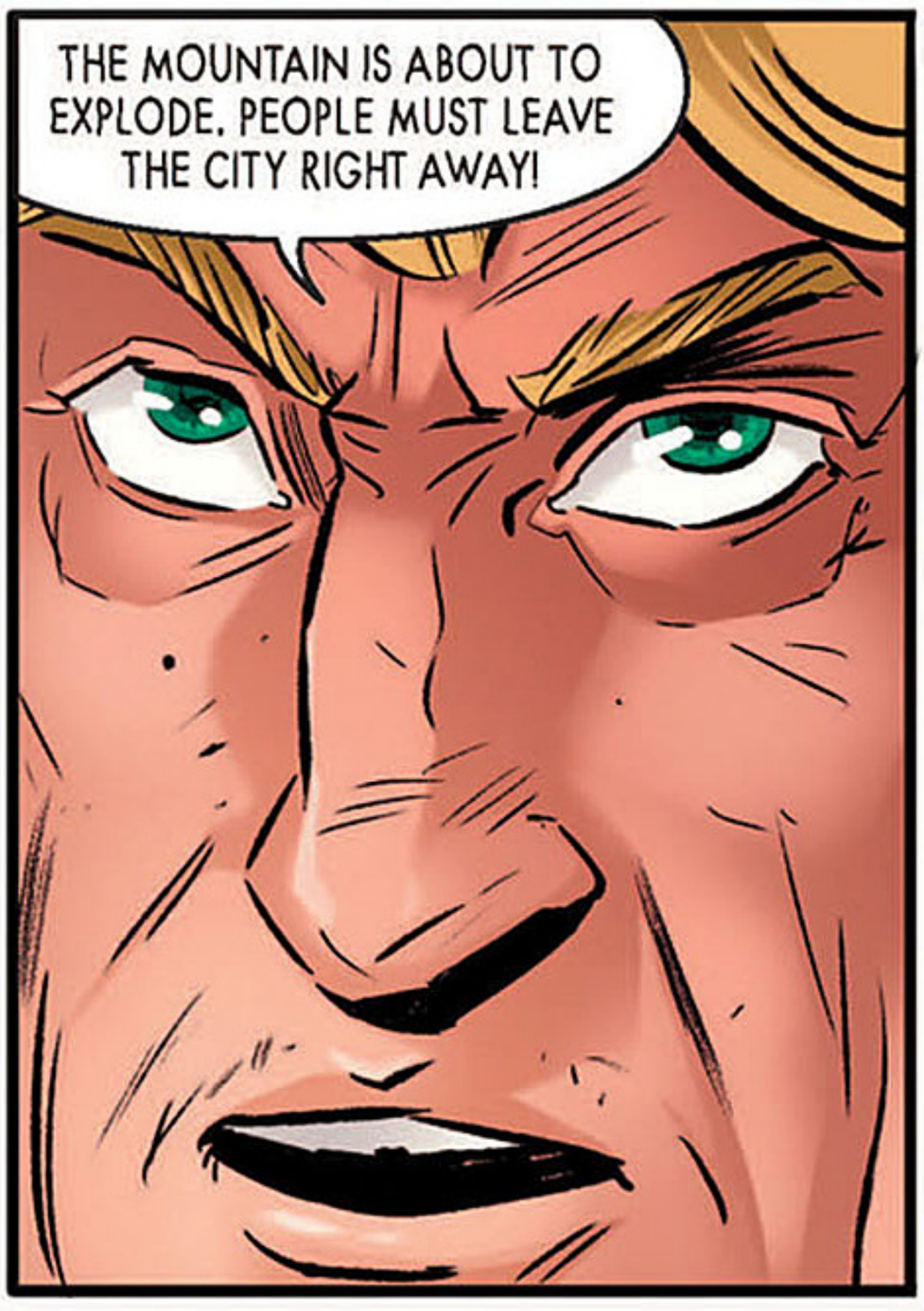
SMOKE RISING FROM THE PEAK!

TATA . . .
I KNOW.
WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.


IT'S FESTUS!
IDIOTS.
YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVED YOU COULD ESCAPE?

LET ME GO!

SIR, PLEASE! A DISASTER IS COMING.

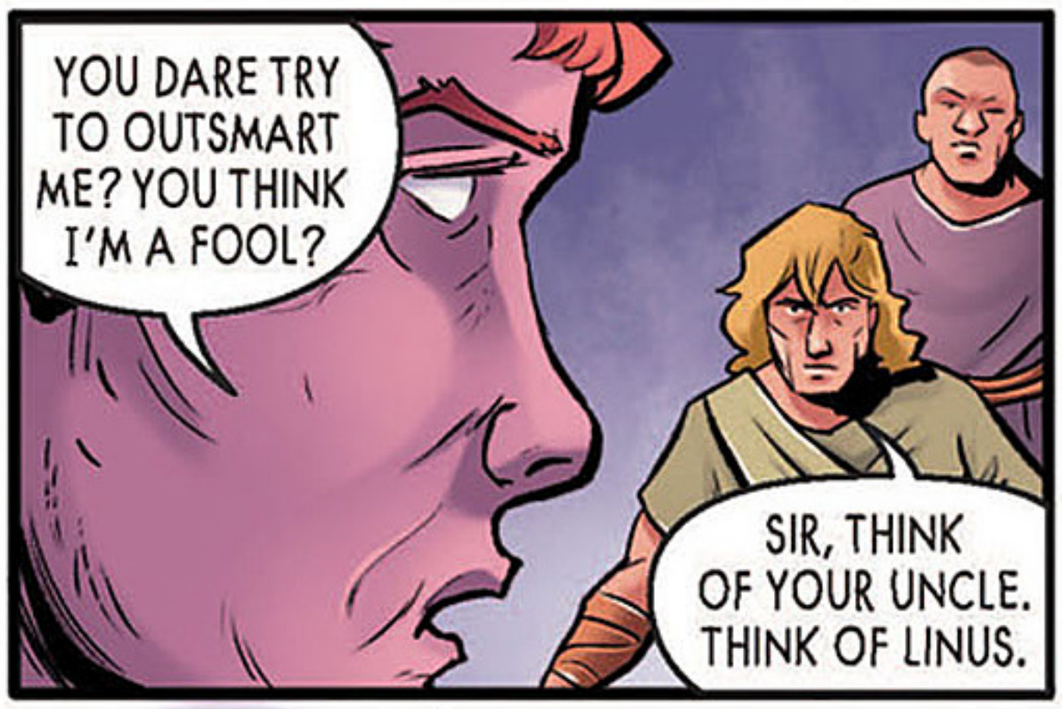

THE MOUNTAIN IS ABOUT TO EXPLODE. PEOPLE MUST LEAVE THE CITY RIGHT AWAY!

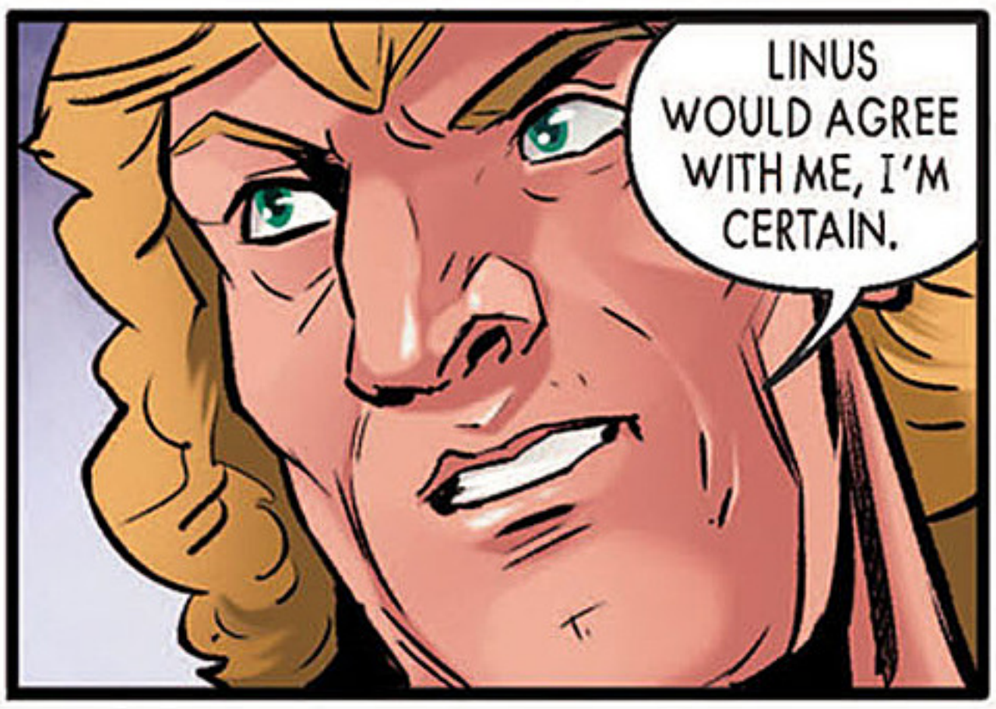
YOU THINK YOU CAN SAVE YOURSELF BY TELLING TALES?

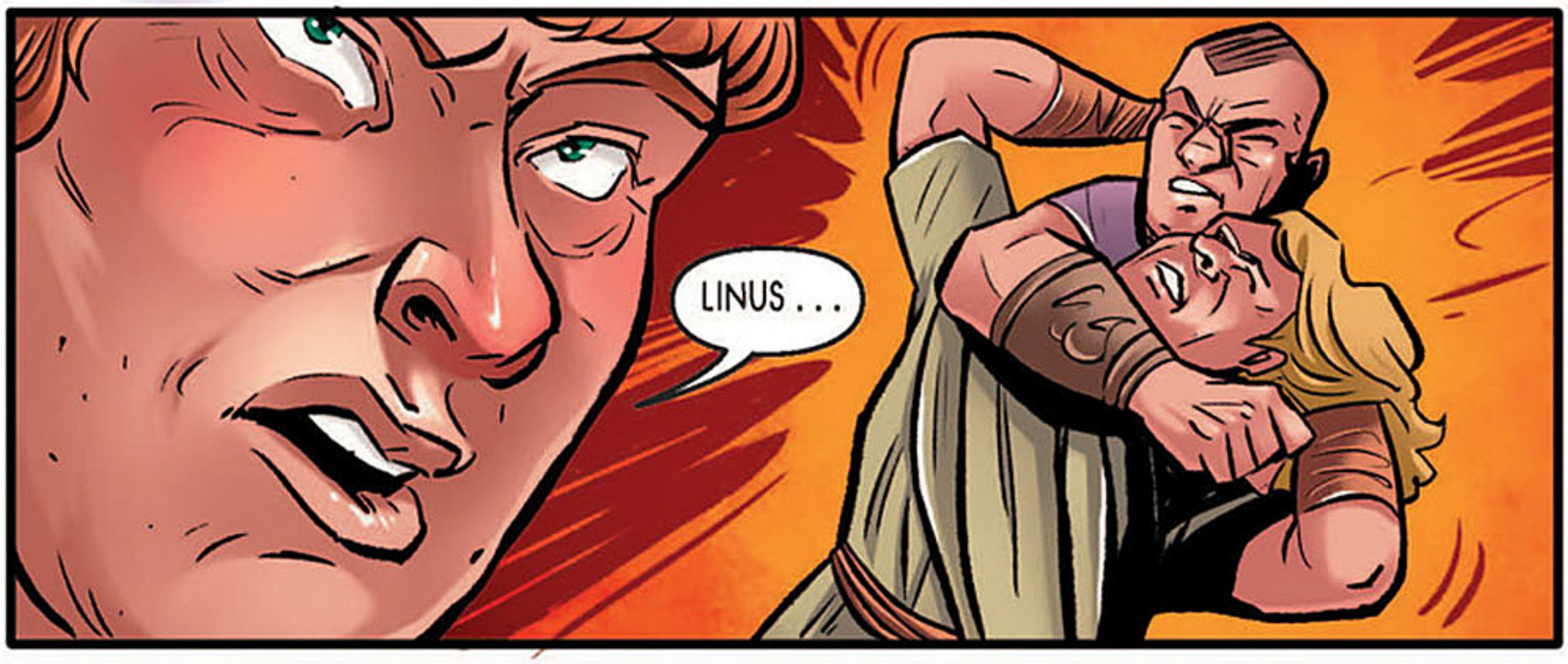
NO! YOU MUST LISTEN!

YOU FELT THE EARTH TREMORS. LOOK AT THE MOUNTAIN!

SEE FOR YOURSELF! SEE THE SMOKE!
IT WILL EXPLODE AT ANY MOMENT.


YOU DARE TRY TO OUTSMART ME? YOU THINK I'M A FOOL?
SIR, THINK OF YOUR UNCLE. THINK OF LINUS.


LINUS WOULD AGREE WITH ME, I'M CERTAIN.


LINUS . . .

MY UNCLE WAS A WEAK-MINDED FOOL.

LINUS CARED MORE FOR A SLAVE THAN HE DID FOR ME, A RELATIVE.

A MAN OF HIS OWN BLOOD!

THAT'S WHY FESTUS SOLD TATA SO QUICKLY!

TATA HAD THE ONE THING HIS FORTUNE COULDN'T BUY—

—HIS UNCLE'S RESPECT.

AND FESTUS HATES TATA FOR THAT.

TAKE THIS SLAVE TO THE LANISTA!

HE'LL BE JUST IN TIME FOR HIS MATCH AGAINST CYCLOPS.

TATA!

YOU ARE *EVIL*!

IS THAT SO?

TELL HIM THE SLAVE IS A GIFT FROM ME.

MARCUS! NO!

TAKE THE BOY TO THE LANISTA AS WELL.

TODAY THE PEOPLE OF POMPEII WILL HAVE QUITE A SHOW.

I OPEN MY MOUTH TO SCREAM . . .

BOOM
BOOM

BUT THE MOUNTAIN SCREAMS FOR ME.

KA-BOOM

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

RUMBLE

IT'S AS IF A HUNDRED MONSTERS WOKE UP IN THEIR UNDERGROUND CAVES . . .

RUMBLE

AND THEY ARE POUNDING THE WALLS IN FURY.

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
KRAKA-KOW
KOW-
KRAKA-KRAKA KAKOW
LOOK AT THE MOUNTAIN!
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!
EVERYONE MUST LEAVE POMPEII!
WHY ARE THE GODS PUNISHING US?

NO! *NO!*

STOP THOSE SLAVES!

YOU *MUST* LISTEN!

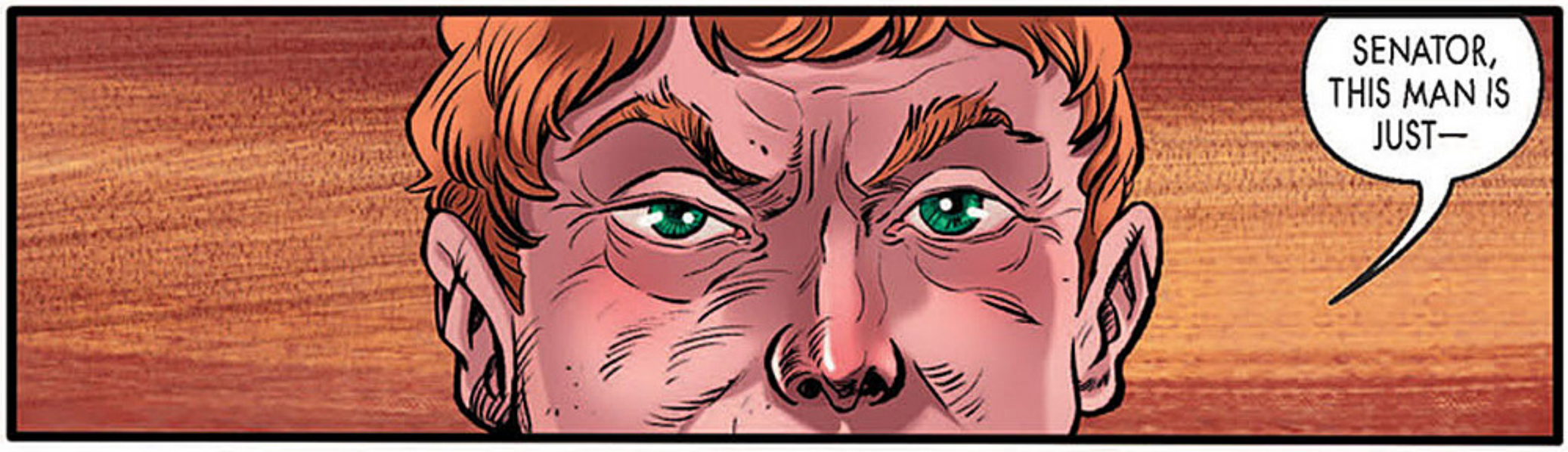
IF YOU WANT TO LIVE, YOU MUST LEAVE *NOW.*

GET OUT OF THE CITY!

GO AS FAR AWAY FROM THE MOUNTAIN AS YOU CAN.

WAIT!

WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN . . . HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS?


SENATOR, THIS MAN IS JUST—

SPEAK.
SIR, FOR YEARS MY MASTER WAS THE SCIENTIST LINUS SELIUS.
MY SON AND I WERE ON THE MOUNTAIN LAST NIGHT AND SAW MANY SIGNS OF DISASTER APPROACHING.
SOON IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO ESCAPE.

HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?

A FEW HOURS AT MOST.

THE WORST WILL COME AFTER THE MOUNTAIN RUNS OUT OF POWER.

I BELIEVE ALL THE GASES AND ASH IN THE SKY WILL COME BACK DOWN.

A DEADLY CLOUD WILL SWEEP ACROSS POMPEII.

DEAR GODS . . .

FESTUS, WE MUST WARN THE MAGISTRATES!

WE MUST ORDER THE PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE CITY!

ORDER THEM TO—?

THIS IS NONSENSE!

LOOK AT THE CLOUDS!

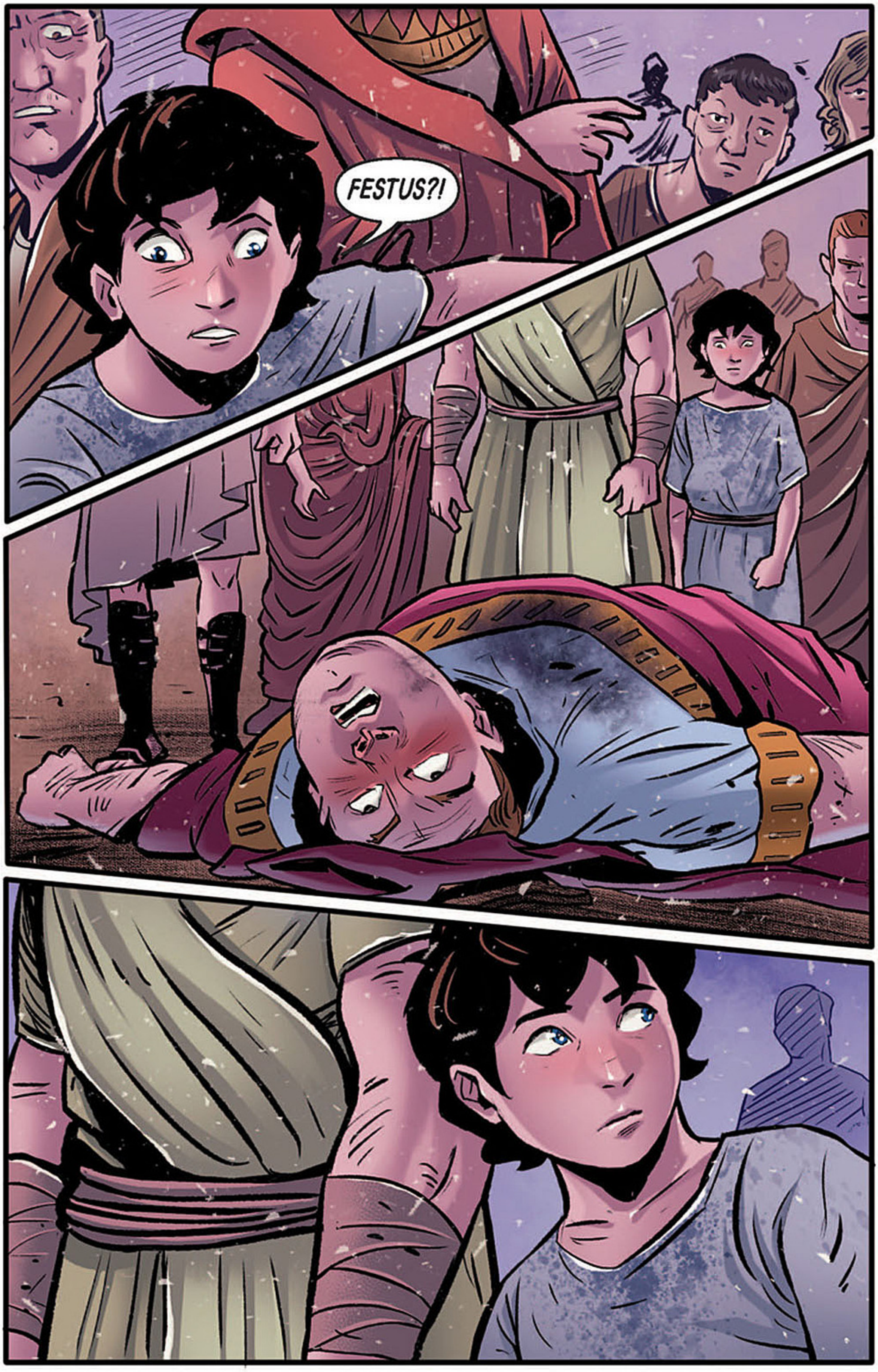
KRAKA-KÖW

KRAKA-KRAKA-BOOM

MARCUS! TAKE COVER!

I HEAR A WAIL FROM THE CROWD.

THE MASTER IS DEAD.


FESTUS?!

I SHOULD FEEL HAPPY . . .

BUT THERE'S NO PLEASURE IN SEEING A MAN DIE.

BOOM

BOOM

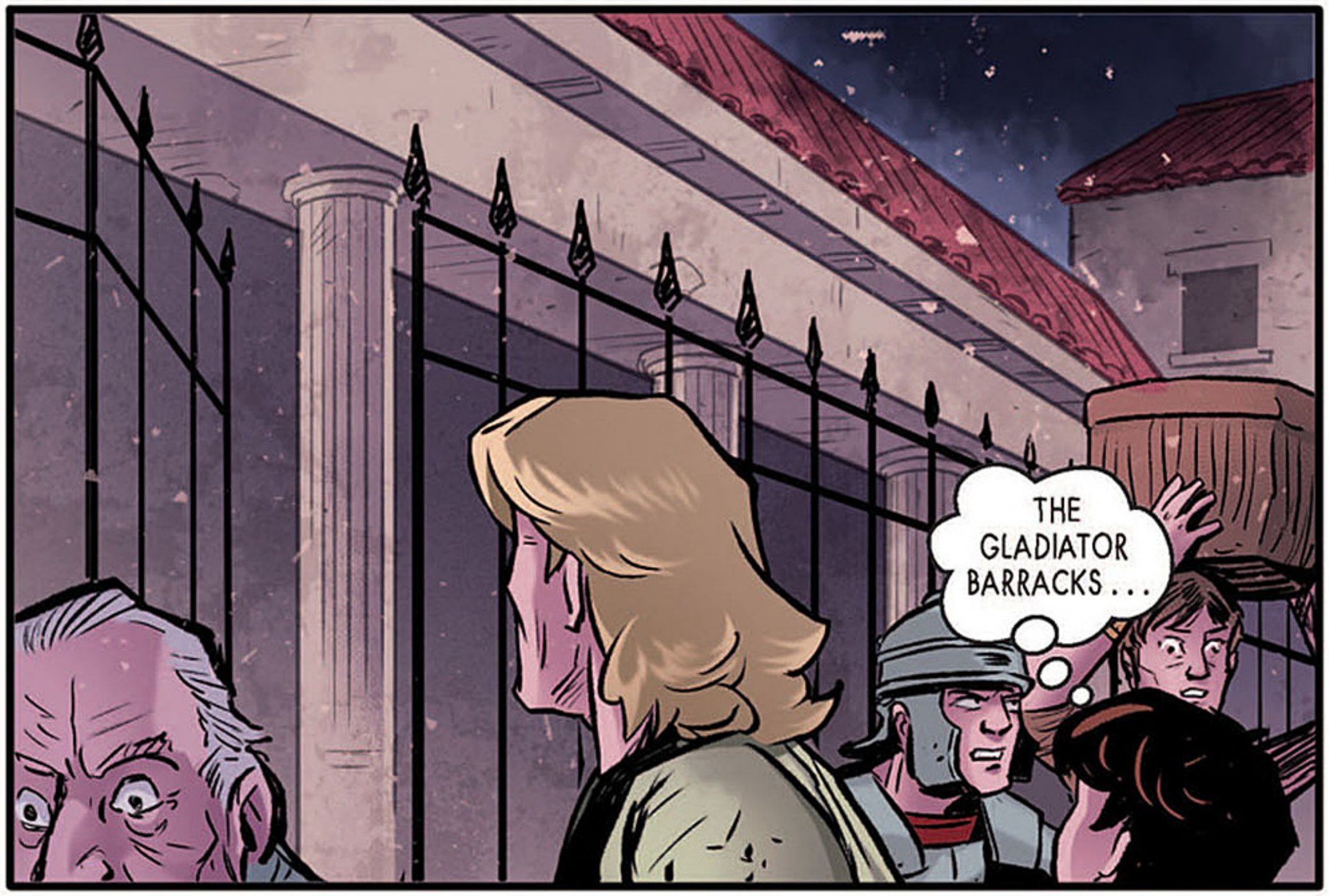
BOOM

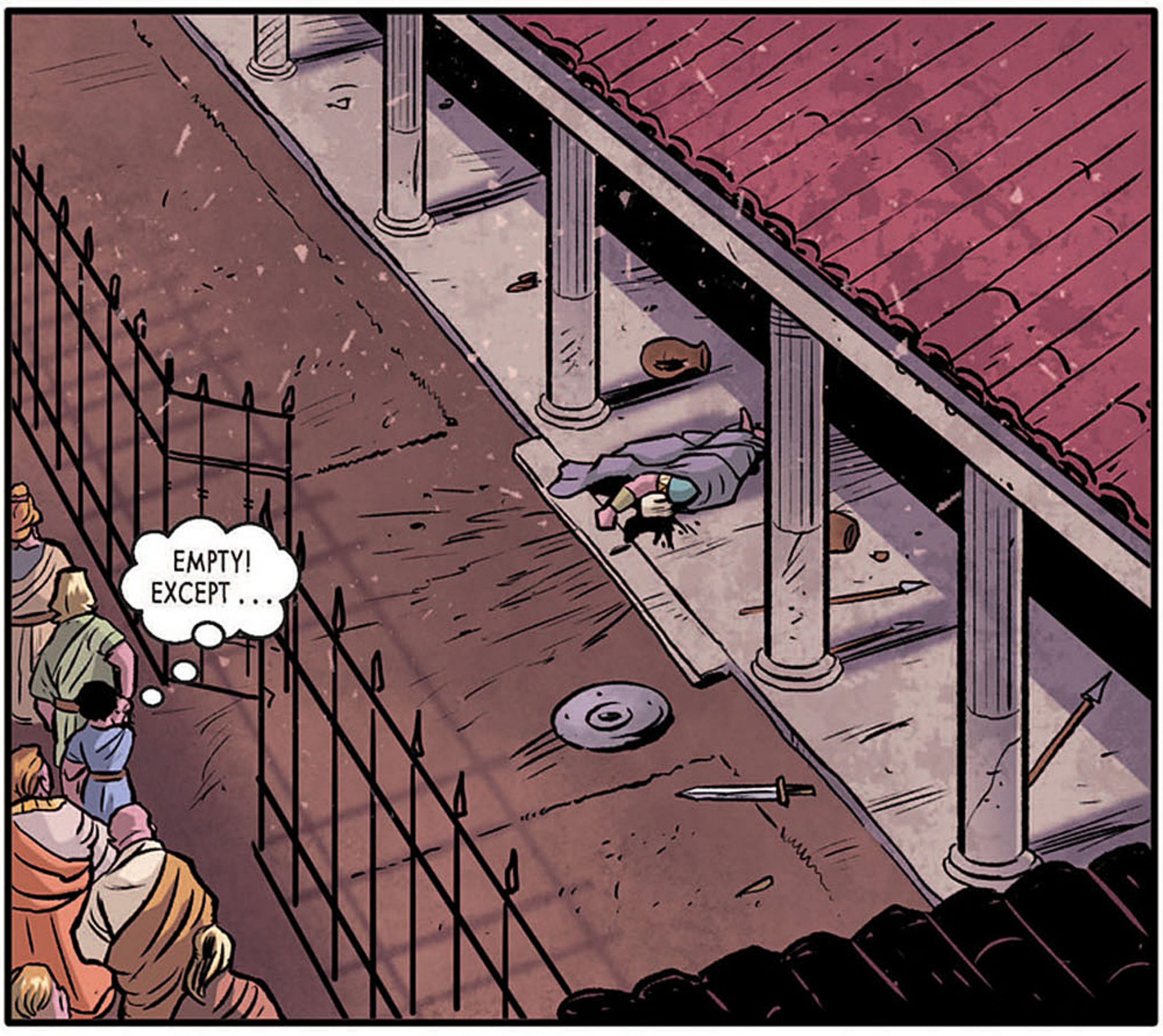
NOT EVEN A MAN AS HATEFUL AS FESTUS.

LEAVE THE CITY!
GO DIRECTLY TO THE GATES. LEAVE AT ONCE!
THE MAGISTRATES LISTENED TO THE SENATOR FROM ROME.
WE'VE DONE OUR DUTY. TIME TO GO.

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
KRAKA-KOW-KRAKA-KOW
NEU-EE-EEE-EEE-EH


THE GLADIATOR BARRACKS . . .


EMPTY! EXCEPT . . .

THE LANISTA!

TATA!

I KNOW. I SEE HIM.

JUST KEEP MOVING.

CYCLOPS MUST HAVE ESCAPED INTO THIS CROWD.

HE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME ANYMORE.

BOOM KRAK-KOW

WE'RE ALL FIGHTING THE SAME ENEMY NOW.

ROCKS FALLING FROM THE SKY!

HARDENED ASH.

PING

PING

PING

PING

BAM

BAM

BAM

BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM

AAAIIEEEEEEEEEEE

HOLD ON TIGHT, MARCUS!

I WANT US OUT OF THIS CROWD!

IT'S TOO DANGEROUS OUT THERE . . .
MANY PEOPLE ARE GOING TO GET TRAMPLED.

THE ROCKS ARE COMING DOWN EVEN HARDER NOW!

BAM

BAM

BAM

WE CAN WAIT IN THAT TEMPLE UNTIL IT STOPS.

BAM

BAM

BAM

BAM

BAM

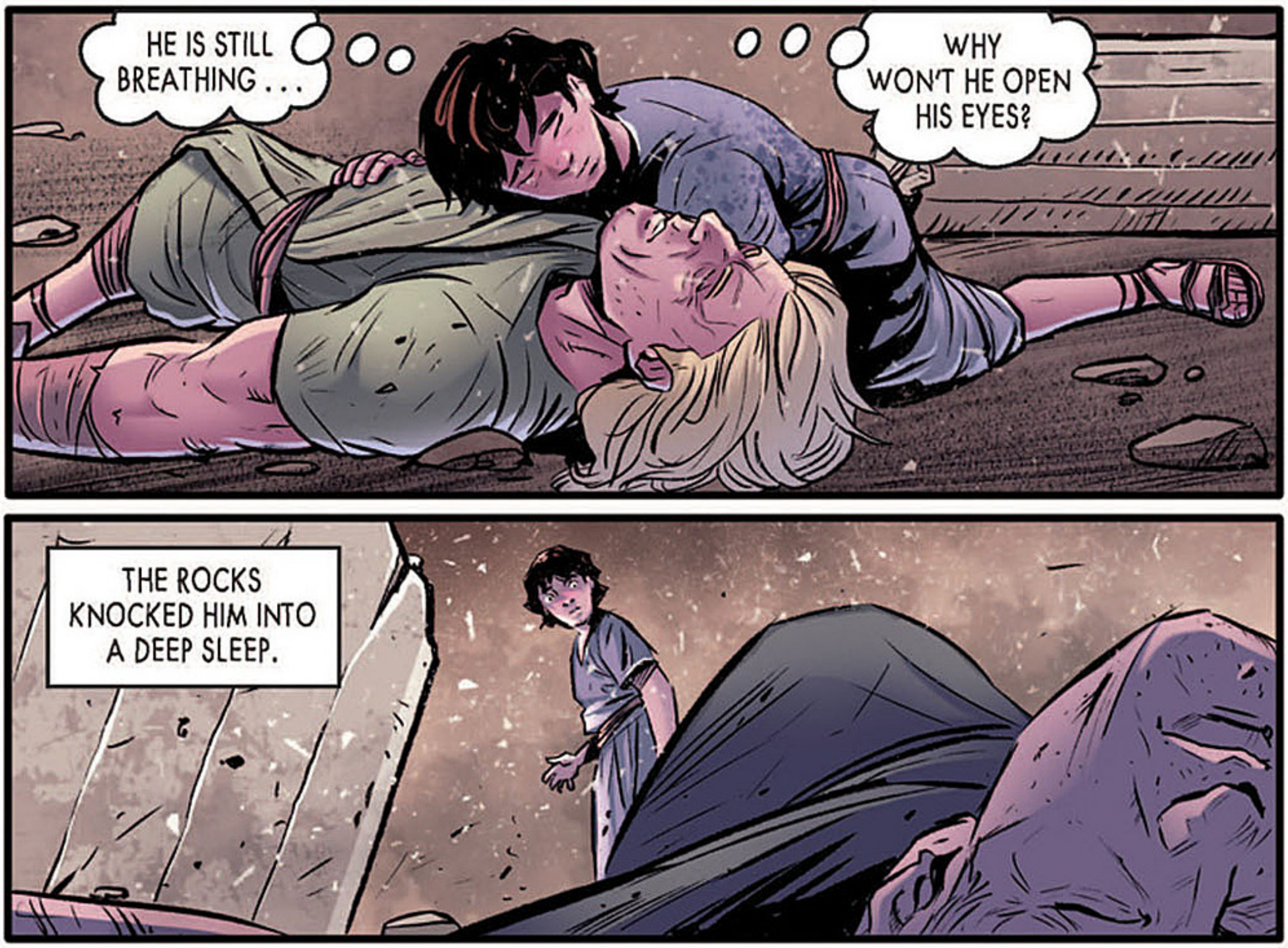
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BOOM
KA-BOOM
KRAKA-KRAKA-KAKOW

TATA . . .

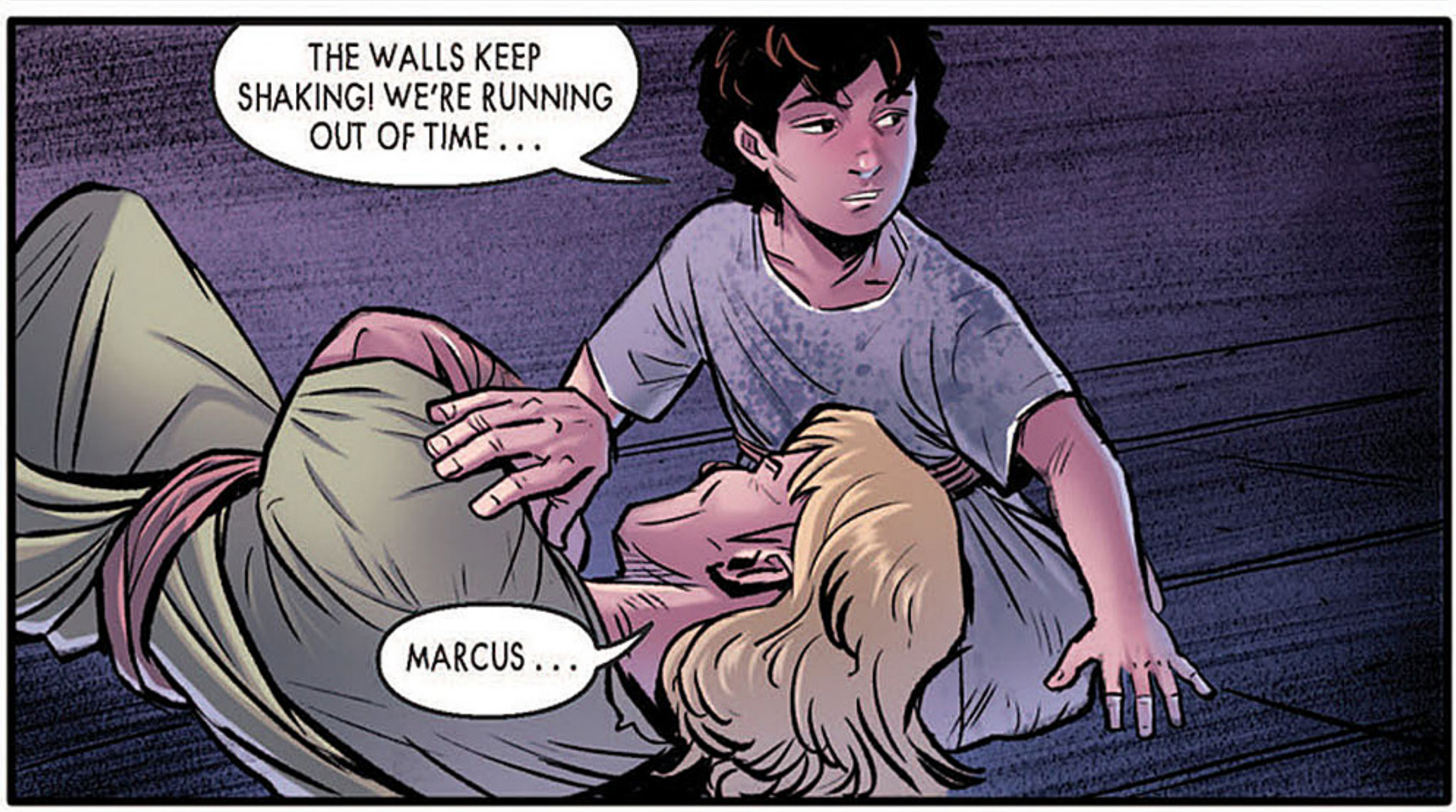
NO!

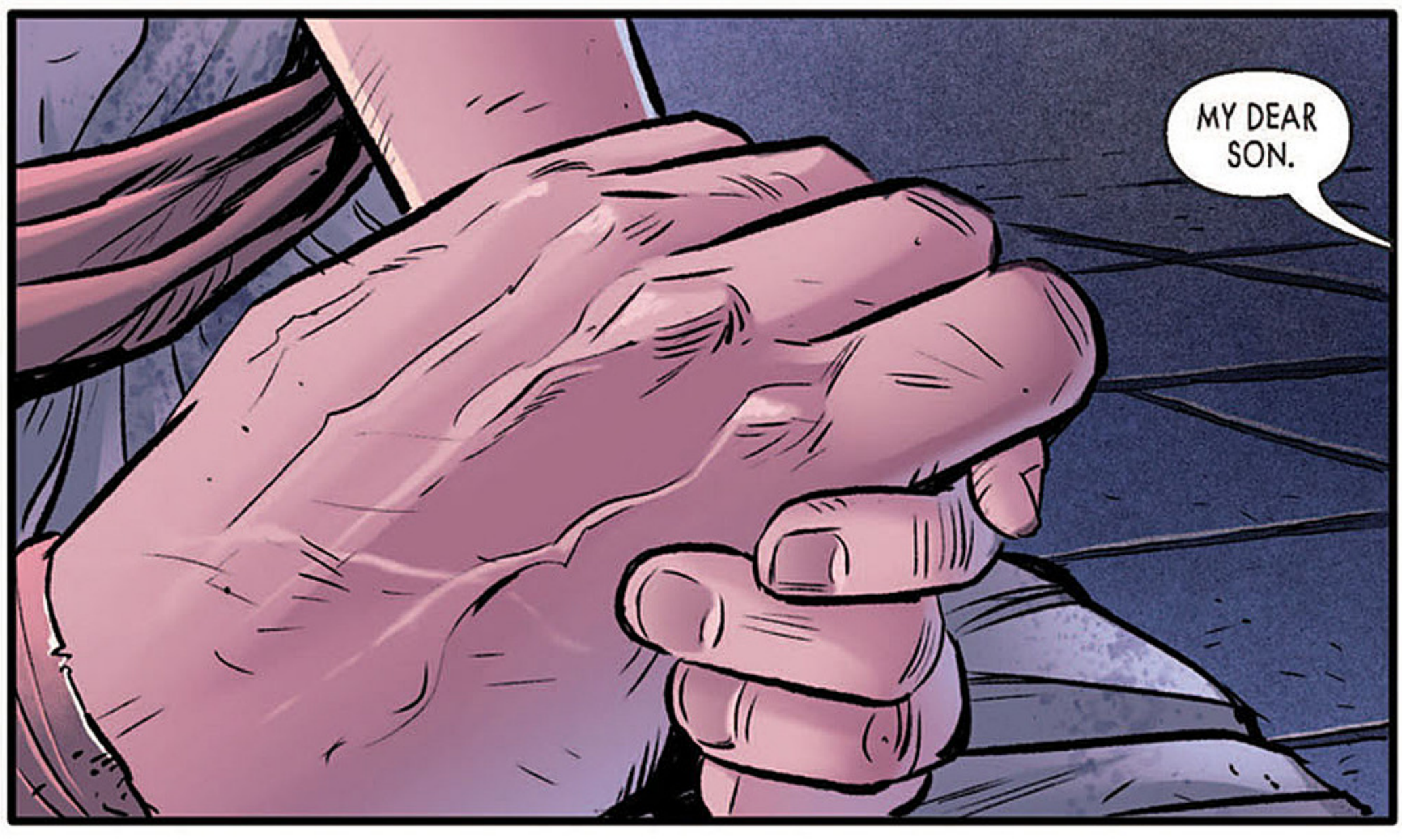
TATA!
I'M COMING!

TATA,
WAKE UP!
PLEASE
WAKE UP . . .


HE IS STILL BREATHING . . .
WHY WON'T HE OPEN HIS EYES?
THE ROCKS KNOCKED HIM INTO A DEEP SLEEP.
SCRAAAAAPE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
HOURS GO BY.

TATA!


THE WALLS KEEP SHAKING! WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME . . .
MARCUS . . .


MY DEAR SON.

YOU MUST GO.

I KNOW. AS SOON AS YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH WE CAN—

NO.

I'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO THE GATES.

BUT IF YOU GO NOW, YOU'LL STILL HAVE A CHANCE.

NO! I WON'T!

I WON'T LEAVE YOU, TATA!

PLEASE. I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS. YOU MUST DO THIS FOR ME.

I'VE CONSIDERED EVERY IDEA. THERE IS NO OTHER POSSIBILITY.

I'M SORRY, TATA.

BUT I'M STAYING HERE WITH YOU.

I DON'T WANT TATA TO SEE ME CRY.

TATA . . .

IS THAT . . . MERCURY?

"WHEN HOPE IS LOST . . ."

"FOLLOW THE HAND OF MERCURY."

YES . . . WHAT IS IT, MARCUS?

THAT OLD BEGGAR WOMAN.

SHE SAID SOMETHING ELSE TO ME.

"WHEN HOPE IS LOST, FOLLOW THE HAND OF MERCURY."

I KNOW IT'S FOOLISH TO BELIEVE A RANT FROM A STRANGER.

PERHAPS IT IS.

PERHAPS NOT.

I HALF EXPECT THE GOD TO COME TO LIFE AND FLY US TO THE HEAVENS.

PERHAPS THERE IS TRUTH IN HER WORDS . . .
LOOK AT THE STATUE'S HAND.
IT'S POINTING AT SOMETHING!
BUT TO WHAT? THE FLOOR IS BARE.

THERE'S A GAP BETWEEN THESE TWO TILES!

I FEEL A GROOVE ON ONE SIDE.

A TRAPDOOR!

CREEEAK

TATA SHAKES OFF HIS PAIN.

IT STINKS OF SULFUR.

THERE'S A LADDER. IT MUST LEAD TO A TUNNEL.

WHERE DOES IT GO?

THERE ARE TUNNELS UNDER MANY ROMAN CITIES.

MOST TUNNELS LEAD OUTSIDE THE GATES. PEOPLE USE THEM TO ESCAPE WHEN THEIR ENEMIES ATTACK.

BUT, TATA . . .

WHAT IF THIS TUNNEL DOESN'T GO OUT OF THE CITY?

WE STILL HAVE TO TRY IT.

MARCUS! IT *IS* A TUNNEL!

COME DOWN QUICKLY!

THIS WAY...

FOLLOW CLOSE BEHIND ME.

IT'S AS HOT AS AN OVEN DOWN HERE . . .

THIS PASSAGE IS VERY NARROW.

WE'LL HAVE TO CRAWL.

WHAT IF THE SULFUR KILLS US?

WHAT IF THE TUNNEL COLLAPSES?

THINK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE, MARCUS.
REMEMBER THE HEROES OF OLD.
REMEMBER ULYSSES, RETURNING HOME FROM WAR.

THINK OF HERCULES FIGHTING FEROCIOUS BEASTS.

BUT NO.

THOSE STORIES ARE NO HELP TO ME NOW.

WHAT IF THIS TUNNEL NEVER ENDS?

WE'LL BE TRAPPED IN THIS EVIL DARKNESS FOREVER.

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT OUT!

BUT I REALIZE THERE'S A NEW STORY BEING WRITTEN.
IT'S THE STORY OF A SLAVE BOY WHO SAVED HIS FATHER WITH A DEADLY SNAKE.
HE ESCAPED FROM A POISONOUS CLOUD, AND FROM ROCKS RAINING DOWN FROM THE SKY.

HE WAS NOT FAVORED BY THE GODS.

HE WAS NOT AIDED BY POWERFUL KINGS.

A MYSTERIOUS BEGGAR WOMAN GUIDED HIM.

A TATTERED OLD MARE CARRIED HIM.

AND HIS FATHER—

—BRAVE AND WISE . . .

SHOWED HIM A PATH THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

TODAY, I AM THE HERO OF THAT STORY . . .

HELP ME KICK THE DOOR OPEN!

RUMBLE RUMBLE

RUMBLE

BAM

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

AND I HAVE THE STRENGTH TO KEEP GOING.

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

IS THE EXIT BLOCKED?
NO . . .
NOT ENOUGH TO STOP US.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

PEG!

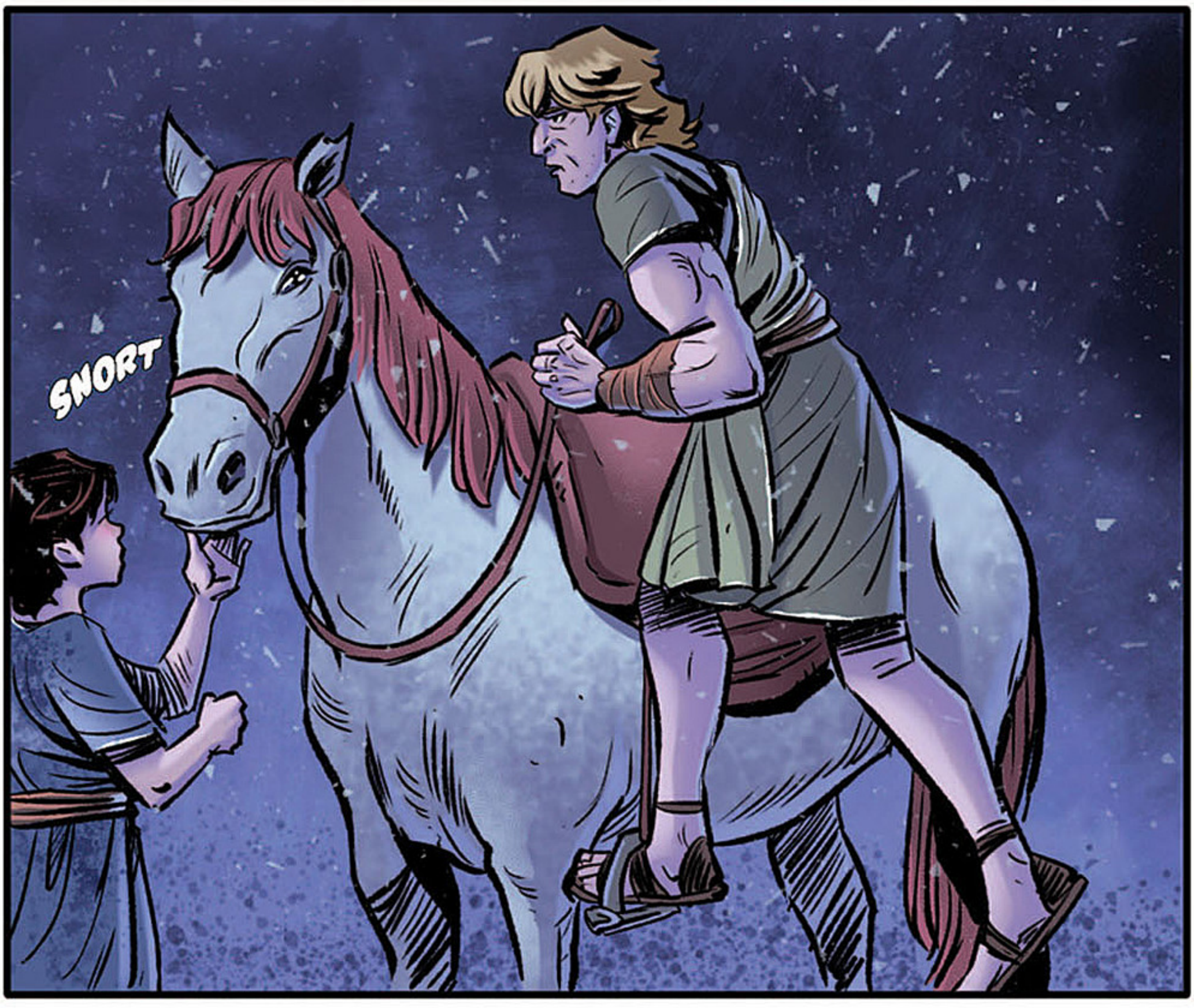
RUMBLE

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

PEG . . .

YOU WAITED!


SNORT

OF COURSE SHE DIDN'T LEAVE US.

CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP

ON THIS TERRIBLE DAY . . .

CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP

CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP CA-CLOP

PEG REALLY DOES HAVE WINGS.

RUMBLE

THOSE LEFT BEHIND TAKE COVER.

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

THE CLOUD COLLAPSES, AND WITHIN SECONDS . . .

THE CITY OF POMPEII IS BURNED AND BURIED.

BUT THOSE HORRORS ARE NOW BEHIND ME.

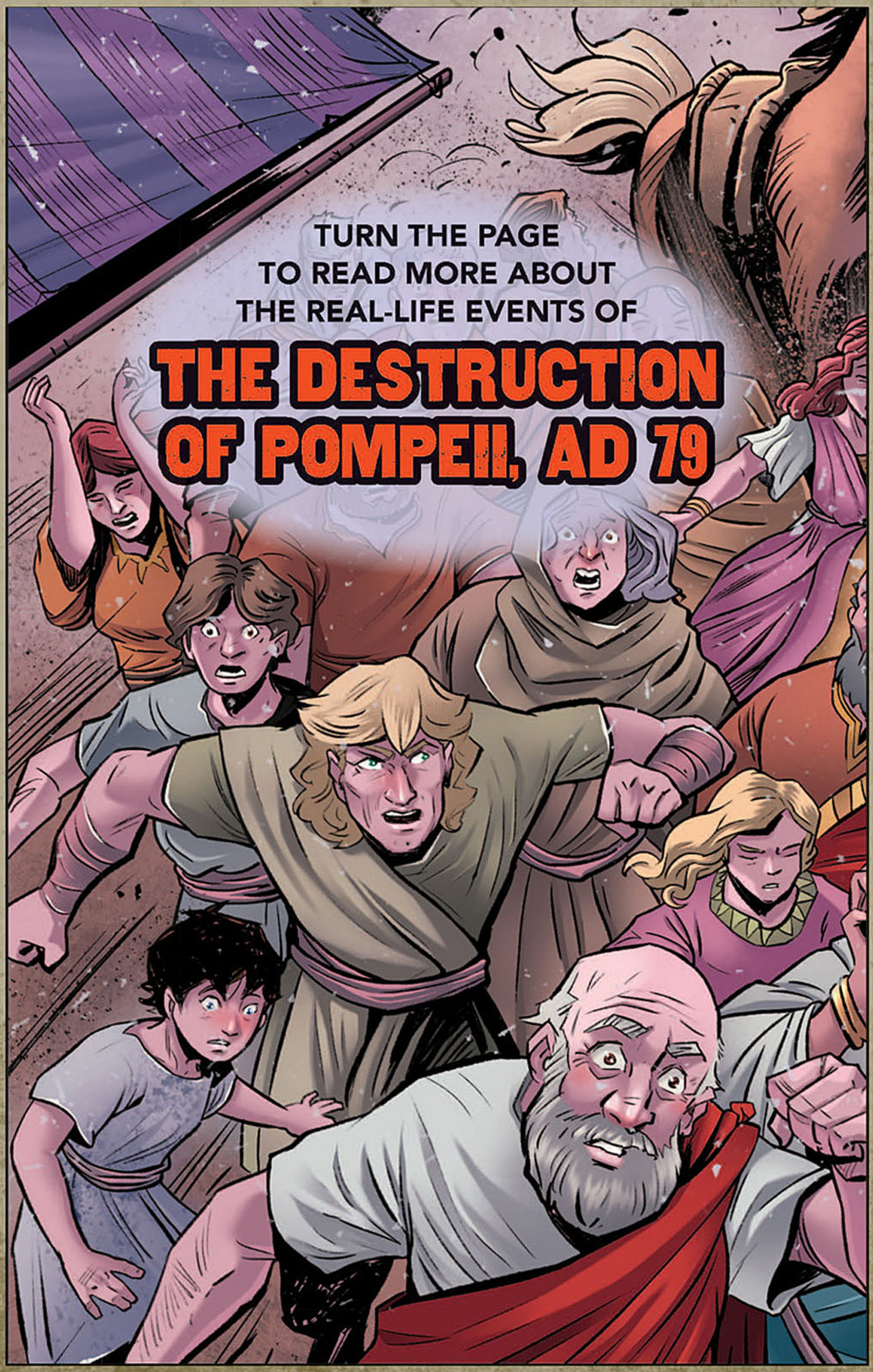
ALL I FEEL IS A WHISPER OF HEAT ON MY BACK.

MANY MILES BEHIND US, A CLOUD OF ASH AND GAS GATHERS STRENGTH OVER POMPEII.

MOST OF THE PEOPLE HAVE LEFT THE CITY.

TOGETHER . . .

WE RIDE FOR ROME.


TURN THE PAGE
TO READ MORE ABOUT
THE REAL-LIFE EVENTS OF
THE DESTRUCTION
OF POMPEII, AD 79

Dear Readers,

As I wrote this story, I kept reminding myself how very long ago it was that Pompeii was destroyed. It was before the United States was a country and even before the time of the knights and the great castles of the Middle Ages. Pompeii is in Italy—but two thousand years ago, the country of Italy didn't yet exist. Parts of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East were all combined in one huge kingdom known as the Roman Empire.

I learned all about life in ancient Roman times during a visit to Pompeii. It felt like traveling back in time. Most of the city has been uncovered and is now an enormous outdoor museum. And, of course, the mountain Vesuvius still looms over Pompeii just as it did back in AD 79. Vesuvius is now silent and green, though it remains one of the most dangerous volcanoes in the world. During my visit, I kept nervously peeking up at it, checking for wisps of smoke.

I hope what you've learned in my book will inspire you to learn more on your own. Keep reading to hear more about Pompeii with Marcus and Tata to guide you.

Nunc valete! (Goodbye for now!)

Karen Zacharias

LIFE IN ANCIENT ROMAN POMPEII

IN MANY WAYS, LIFE IN ANCIENT ROME WAS BRUTAL.

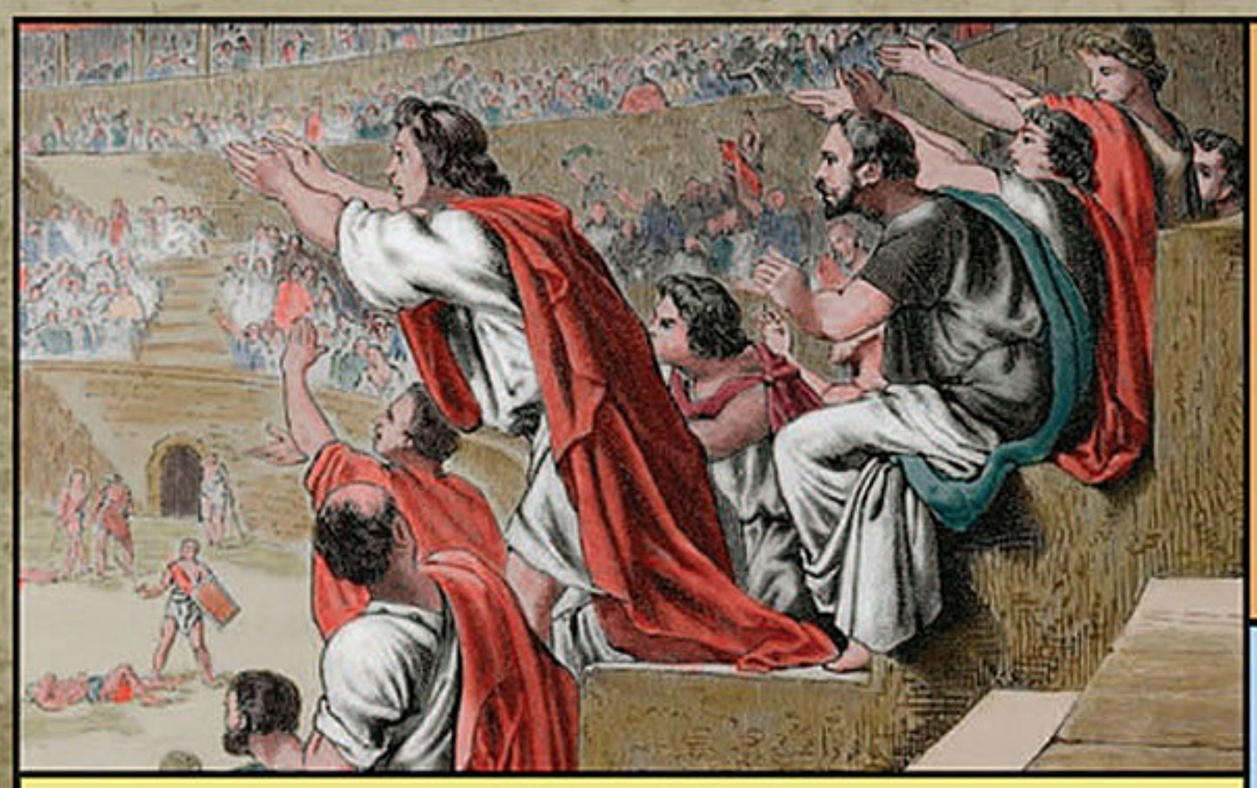
SLAVERY WAS COMMON. SCHOLARS ESTIMATE 10 TO 30 PERCENT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE'S POPULATION WERE ENSLAVED PEOPLE.

ENSLAVED PEOPLE CAME FROM A RANGE OF ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS, AND MANY TYPES OF PEOPLE OWNED SLAVES. ROME'S ARMIES WERE ALWAYS ON THE MARCH, CONQUERING NEW TERRITORIES AND DRAGGING HOME NEW SLAVES. CHILDREN COULD BE **BORN** INTO SLAVERY.

A carved marble frieze from Pompeii depicting gladiators

PUNISHMENTS FOR CRIMES COULD BE VERY **SEVERE**.

GLADIATOR GAMES WERE **CRUEL** EVENTS IN WHICH MEN—OFTEN SLAVES OR CONDEMNED PRISONERS—HAD TO FIGHT TO THE **DEATH** AGAINST OTHER MEN OR ANIMALS.



An engraving from 1881 imagining the arena during a gladiator fight

BUT THE FIGHTS WERE POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT—THEY TOOK PLACE IN HUGE **ARENAS** BEFORE THOUSANDS OF SPECTATORS. PEOPLE IN ANCIENT ROME WERE FANS OF CHAMPION **GLADIATORS** THE WAY THAT PEOPLE TODAY FOLLOW SPORTS STARS.

WITHOUT MODERN MEDICINES AND VACCINES, AS MANY AS **HALF** OF ALL CHILDREN DIED BEFORE AGE TEN.

IN SOME WAYS, LIFE IN ANCIENT POMPEII WAS SURPRISINGLY **SIMILAR** TO OUR LIVES TODAY. THE KIDS OF POMPEII WHO WERE NOT SLAVES WENT TO SCHOOL, LEARNED MATH, READ STORIES AND POEMS, AND PLAYED SPORTS.

A portrait from a fresco found in Pompeii

PEOPLE IN ANCIENT POMPEII **LOVED** THEIR DOGS, WHICH THEY KEPT AS PETS AND GUARD DOGS.

Cave canem means "Beware the dog" in Latin. This mosaic was found in the entrance to a house in Pompeii.

THEY SAW—AND DREW—GRAFFITI ON THE WALLS AROUND TOWN.

Ancient graffiti found in Pompeii

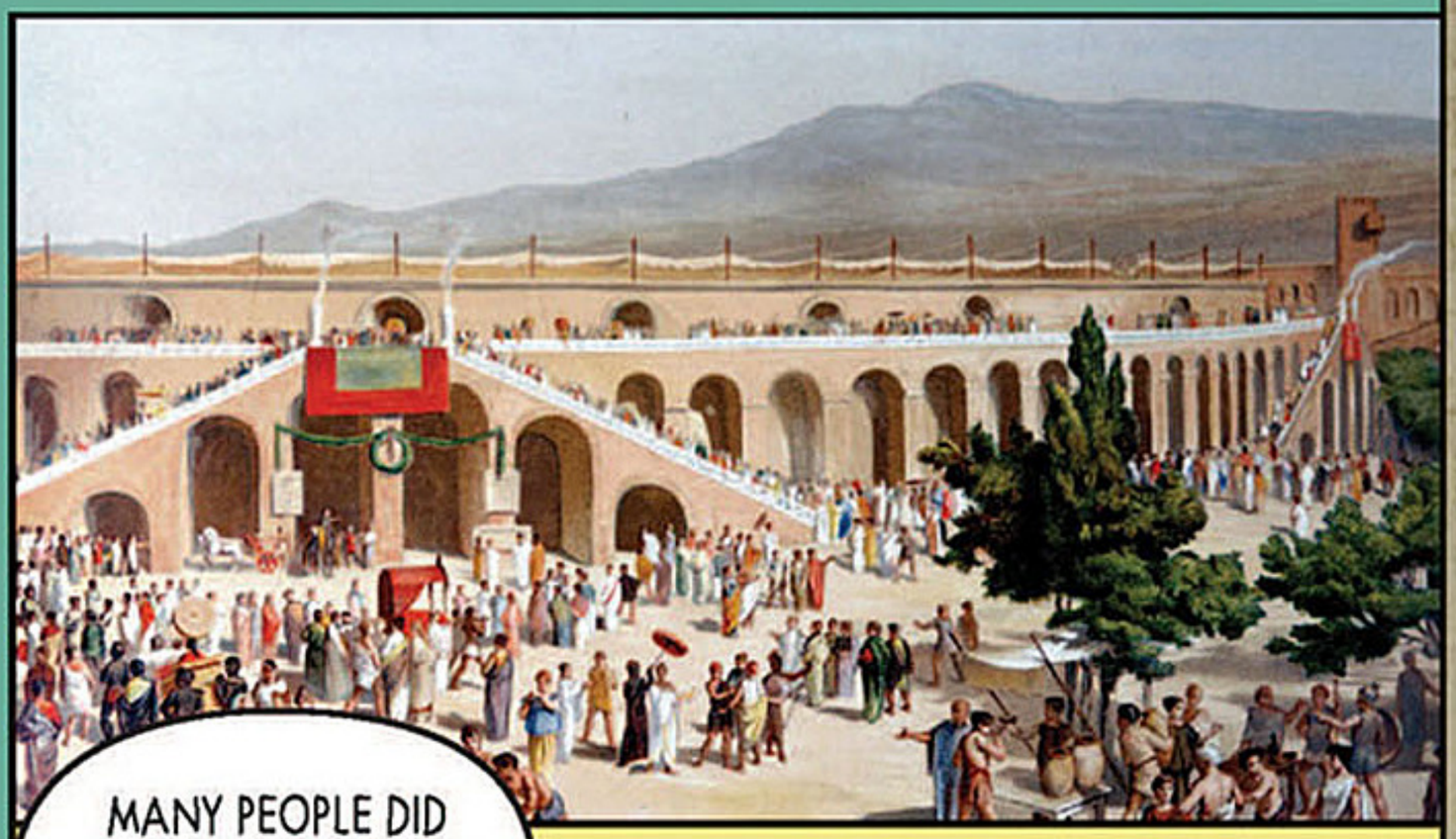
PEOPLE WENT **SHOPPING** FOR WHAT THEY NEEDED AT THE MARKET.

THERE WERE EVEN FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS! POMPEII'S STREETS WERE LINED WITH LITTLE **STALLS** THAT SERVED UP READY-TO-EAT FOOD LIKE STEW AND BREAD.

A street food shop in Pompeii. The holes in the counter held food and jars of wine.

VESUVIUS ERUPTS

EXPERTS ESTIMATE THAT AS MANY AS TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE LIVED IN POMPEII AND IN ITS SURROUNDING TOWNS. OF THOSE, BETWEEN TEN THOUSAND AND SIXTEEN THOUSAND LIKELY DIED IN THE ERUPTION OF **MOUNT VESUVIUS**.



An artist's rendering of Pompeii pre-eruption

MANY PEOPLE DID ESCAPE IN THE FIRST HOURS AFTER THE ERUPTION.

BUT THOSE WHO **STAYED** BEHIND—WHETHER THEY CHOSE TO OR NOT—WERE KILLED, LIKELY BY THE WAVES OF INTENSELY HOT GASES AND ASH THAT SWEPT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN STARTING ABOUT **EIGHTEEN HOURS** AFTER IT FIRST ERUPTED.

THESE *PYROCLASTIC SURGES* TRAVELED AT HUNDREDS OF MILES PER HOUR AND **INSTANTLY** BURNED EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATHS.

An artist's rendering (from the late 1800s) of the eruption in AD 79

A photograph of Mount Vesuvius erupting again in 1944

THE **ERUPTION** LASTED FOR TWO DAYS AND BURIED POMPEII UNDER THIRTY FEET OF ASH AND STONE.

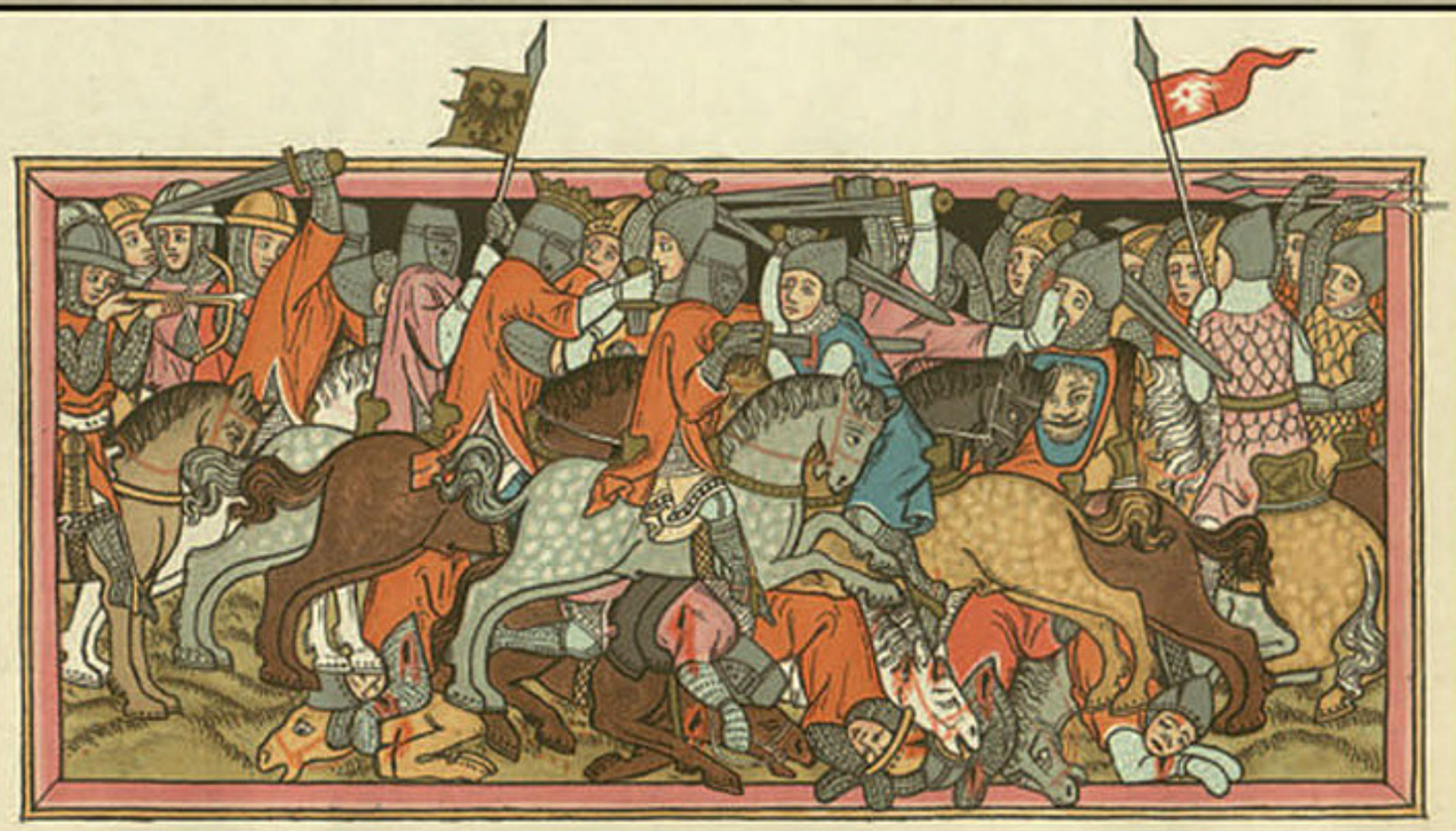
WORD OF THE DISASTER REACHED ROME, AND THE **EMPEROR** SENT A SMALL TEAM TO INVESTIGATE. BUT IT'S UNLIKELY ANYONE GOT TOO CLOSE.

FOR MONTHS AFTERWARD, THE GROUND WAS VERY HOT. **POISONOUS GASES** CONTINUED TO SEEP FROM THE EARTH. THERE WERE CONTINUAL EARTH TREMORS.

AFTER THE ERUPTION

IN THE EARLY YEARS AFTER THE ERUPTION, PEOPLE TRIED TO **TUNNEL** INTO THE RUINS TO FIND THEIR BELONGINGS—OR TO STEAL.

AS THE YEARS PASSED, THE CITY WAS SLOWLY FORGOTTEN.



BY THE YEAR AD 500, THE GREAT ROMAN EMPIRE HAD CRUMBLED. AFTER THAT, DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD IN EUROPE, THERE WAS A LOT OF MIGRATION, WARFARE, AND PLAGUE. PEOPLE **STRUGGLED** TO SURVIVE.

MANY, MANY **CENTURIES** PASSED. MOUNT VESUVIUS "HEALED" FROM THE ERUPTION. GRASS AND TREES GREW BACK. PEOPLE SLOWLY **RETURNED** TO THE AREAS AROUND THE MOUNTAIN. FARMERS ONCE AGAIN PLANTED OLIVE GROVES AND FARMS ON THE SLOPES.

BY THE 1600S, PEOPLE IN EUROPE WERE **INTERESTED** IN LEARNING AND DISCOVERY AGAIN. MANY BECAME FASCINATED BY THE **ANCIENT** ROMAN CIVILIZATION THAT HAD VANISHED.

THERE WERE RUMORS OF A **BEAUTIFUL** CITY THAT LAY BELOW VESUVIUS. EVERY SO OFTEN A WELL DIGGER OR FARMER WOULD **DISCOVER** AN INTRIGUING ARTIFACT—THE ARM OF A STATUE, A CHUNK OF A MOSAIC.

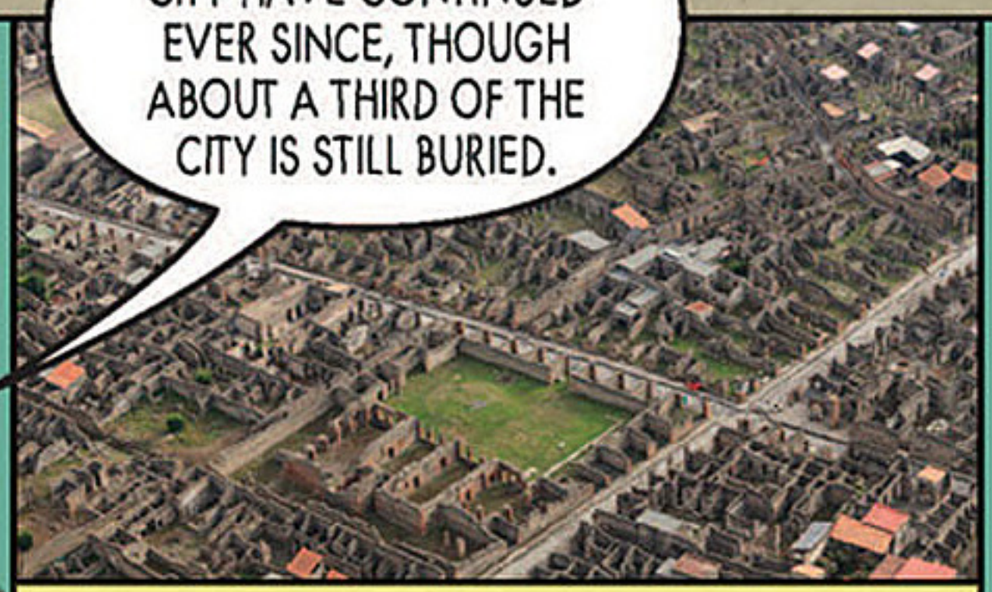
THE REDISCOVERY OF POMPEII

IT WASN'T UNTIL THE YEAR 1764—NEARLY 1,700 YEARS AFTER THE ERUPTION—WHEN ONE OF THE **GREATEST** POMPEII DISCOVERIES WAS MADE: THE RUINS OF A **BEAUTIFUL** TEMPLE.

THE EARLY EXCAVATORS WERE MOSTLY INTERESTED IN **SNATCHING** WHATEVER TREASURE THEY COULD DIG UP. BUT BY THE 1800S, PEOPLE REALIZED THAT POMPEII'S **ARTIFACTS** MUST BE PRESERVED AND STUDIED. TODAY, MOST OF POMPEII'S TREASURES ARE IN MUSEUMS.

Ruins of the Temple of Isis in Pompeii

EXCAVATIONS OF THE CITY HAVE CONTINUED EVER SINCE, THOUGH ABOUT A THIRD OF THE CITY IS STILL BURIED.



An aerial view of some of the Pompeii ruins in the modern day

THERE ARE OTHER PLACES WHERE YOU CAN SEE **RUINS** OF BUILDINGS FROM ANCIENT ROMAN TIMES, SUCH AS THE CITY OF ROME. BUT THERE IS NO PLACE IN THE WORLD LIKE POMPEII, WHICH WAS SEALED FOR CENTURIES, LIKE A **TIME CAPSULE**.

Coins, bread, a gladiator helmet, and household items found in Pompeii

THE ASH AND STONE **PRESERVED** MORE THAN JUST THE BUILDINGS. ARCHEOLOGISTS HAVE UNEARTHED **THOUSANDS** OF ARTIFACTS—SKELETONS, PETRIFIED LOAVES OF BREAD, STATUES, TOYS, FURNITURE, CHARIOTS, GLADIATOR HELMETS, SILVERWARE, COOKING POTS, SHOES, EARRINGS, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.

MOST OF WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT LIFE IN ANCIENT ROME COMES FROM THE **DISCOVERIES** MADE IN POMPEII AND A NEIGHBORING TOWN CALLED **HERCULANEUM**, WHICH WAS ALSO BURIED BY VESUVIUS IN AD 79.

WAITING FOR VESUVIUS

MOUNT VESUVIUS WILL ERUPT AGAIN.

IT IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST **DANGEROUS** VOLCANOES—AND IT IS ALSO ONE OF THE MOST CLOSELY MONITORED.

VESUVIUS HAS ERUPTED MANY TIMES OVER THE PAST FEW CENTURIES. NONE OF THOSE ERUPTIONS WERE NEARLY AS POWERFUL AS THE ONE THAT BURIED POMPEII. BUT EXPERTS HAVE NO DOUBT THAT ANOTHER **ENORMOUS** ERUPTION COULD HAPPEN SOON.

A modern-day view of Vesuvius from Pompeii

An aerial view of Vesuvius and its current surroundings

A HUGE ERUPTION COULD BE **DEVASTATING**. TODAY, AN ESTIMATED 700,000 PEOPLE LIVE IN THE DANGEROUS "RED ZONE" AROUND VESUVIUS. AND JUST FIFTEEN MILES NORTH IS THE CROWDED CITY OF NAPLES, WHERE MORE THAN **THREE MILLION** PEOPLE LIVE.

HOPEFULLY, THE MOUNTAIN WILL GIVE PLENTY OF **WARNING** BEFORE A MAJOR ERUPTION, AND PEOPLE WILL HAVE TIME TO EVACUATE. BUT TODAY, NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS AFTER POMPEII WAS DESTROYED, WE STILL REMAIN **POWERLESS** AGAINST THE DESTRUCTIVE FURY OF A MAJOR VOLCANIC ERUPTION. MUCH OF THIS BEAUTIFUL REGION OF ITALY COULD BE **BURIED** AGAIN.

FURTHER READING

Here are some books you might enjoy about ancient Rome and Pompeii:

Bisel, Sara C. *The Secrets of Vesuvius (A Time Quest Book)*. New York: Scholastic, 1993.

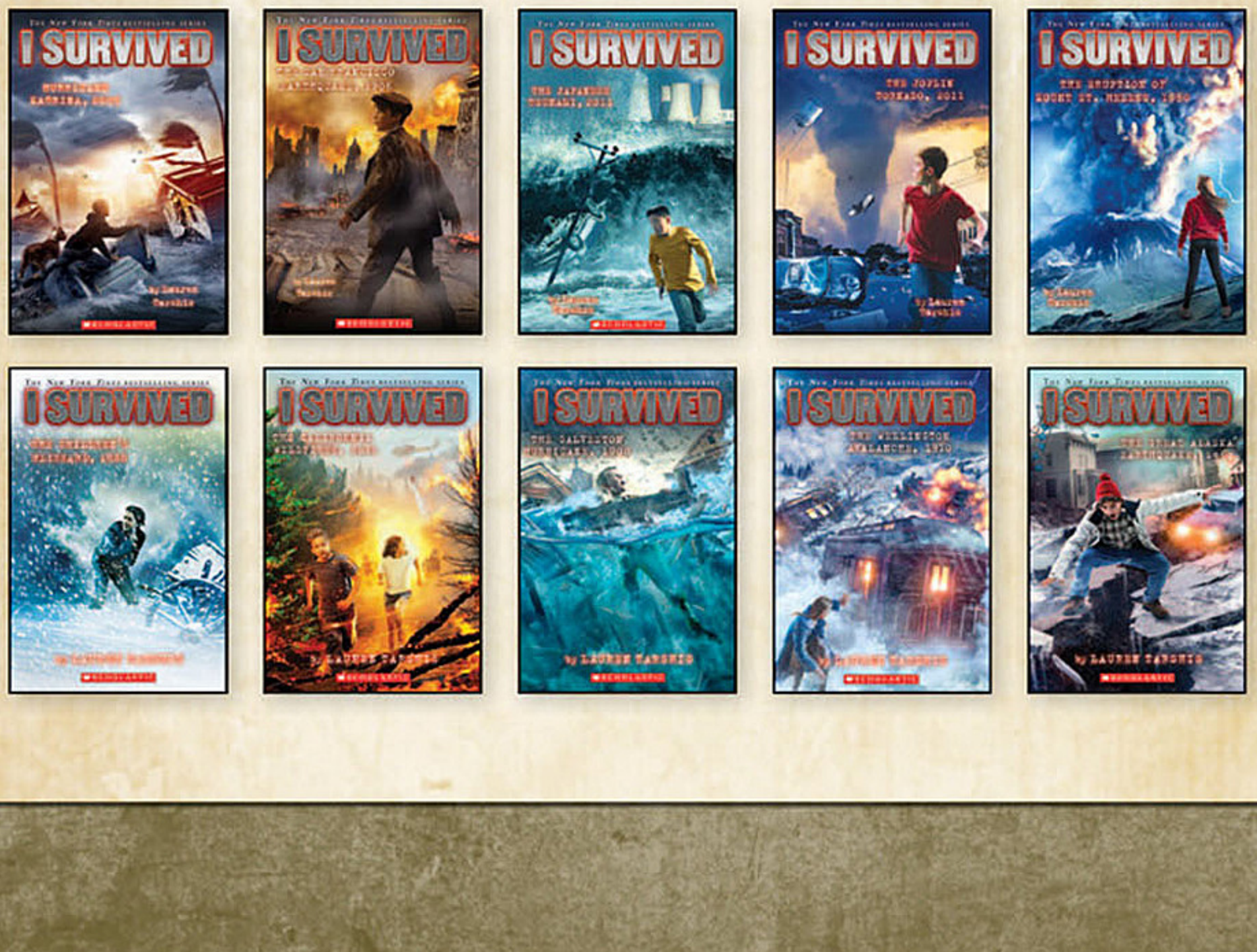
Deem, James M. *Bodies from the Ash: Life and Death in Ancient Pompeii*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005.

Pliny the Younger. *Ashen Sky: The Letters of Pliny the Younger on the Eruption of Vesuvius*. Illustrations by Barry Moser. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007.

Rusch, Elizabeth. *Eruption! Volcanoes and the Science of Saving Lives*. Photographs by Tom Uhlman. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013.

Tanaka, Shelley. *The Buried City of Pompeii*. Illustrations by Greg Ruhl. New York: Hyperion, 1997.

MORE I SURVIVED BOOKS ABOUT NATURAL DISASTERS

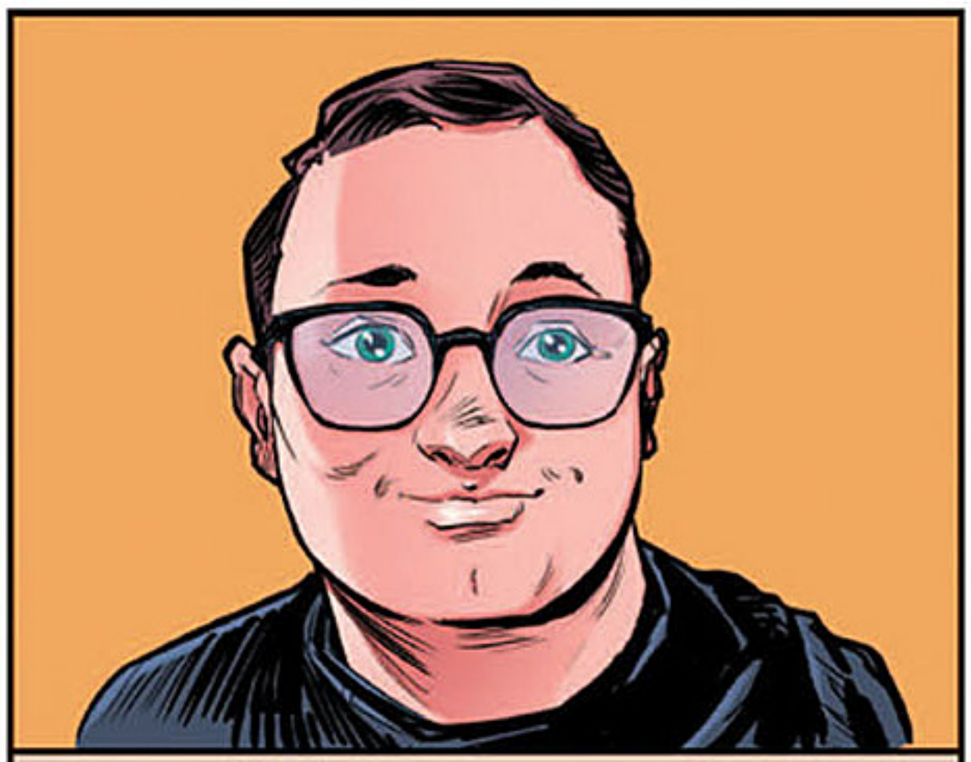

I SURVIVED
THE JAPANESE TSUNAMI, 2011
THE JOPLIN TORNADO, 2011
THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT ST. HELENS, 1980
THE GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE, 1964
THE SALVESTON HURRICANE, 1900
THE WELLINGTON AVALANCHE, 1910
by LAUREN TARSHIS

LAUREN TARSHIS'S

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING I SURVIVED SERIES TELLS STORIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH IN THE MIDST OF UNIMAGINABLE DISASTERS AND TIMES OF TURMOIL. LAUREN HAS BROUGHT HER SIGNATURE WARMTH, INTEGRITY, AND EXHAUSTIVE RESEARCH TO TOPICS SUCH AS THE BATTLE OF D-DAY, THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, HURRICANE KATRINA, THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR, AND OTHER WORLD EVENTS. LAUREN LIVES IN CONNECTICUT WITH HER FAMILY, AND CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT LAURENTARSHIS.COM.

GEORGIA BALL

HAS WRITTEN COMICS FOR MANY OF HER FAVORITE CHILDHOOD CHARACTERS, INCLUDING STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE, TRANSFORMERS, LITTLEST PET SHOP, MY LITTLE PONY, AND THE DISNEY PRINCESSES. IN ADDITION TO ADAPTING LAUREN TARSHIS'S I SURVIVED SERIES TO GRAPHIC NOVELS, GEORGIA WRITES ABOUT HISTORICAL EVENTS SUCH AS THE WORLD WAR II BATTLES OF KURSK AND GUADALCANAL. GEORGIA LIVES WITH HER HUSBAND, DAUGHTER, AND RAMBUNCTIOUS PETS IN FLORIDA. VISIT HER ONLINE AT GEORGIABALLAUTHOR.COM.



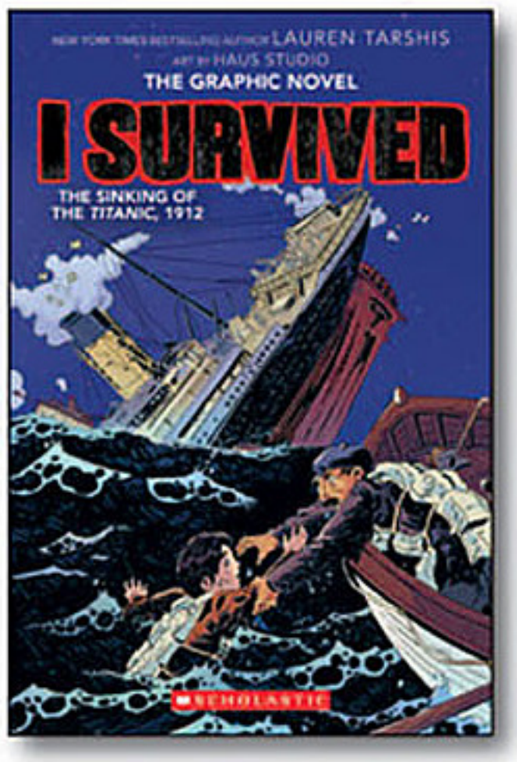
DAVE SHEPHARD

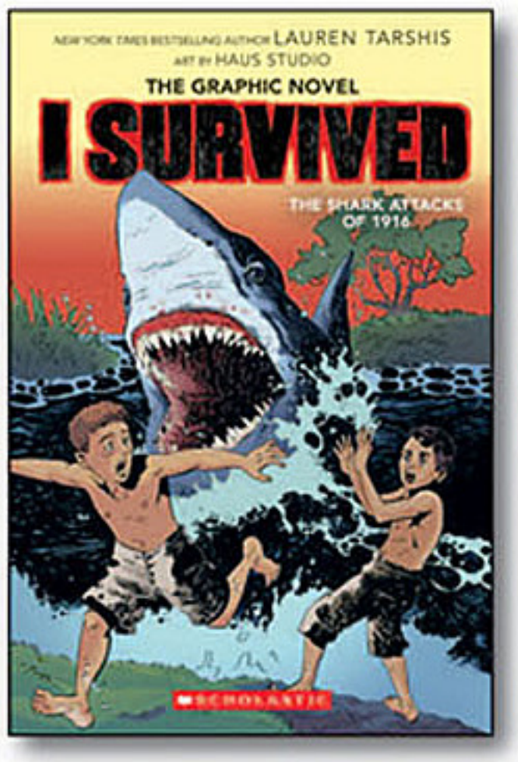
STUDIED ILLUSTRATION IN BRIGHTON, ENGLAND. HIS MANY WORKS INCLUDE FICTION, NONFICTION, PICTURE BOOKS, AND GRAPHIC NOVELS. HE LIVES WITH HIS FAMILY NEAR THE SEA IN THE SOUTH DOWNS OF ENGLAND. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT DAVESHEPHARD.COM.

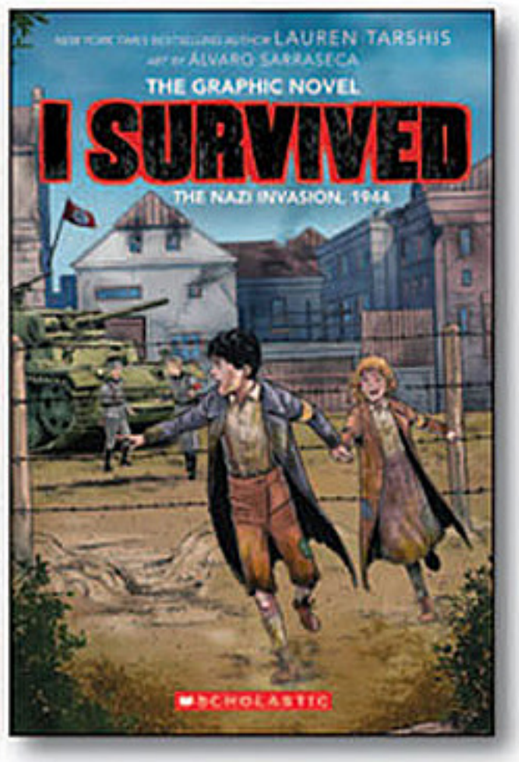
JUANMA AGUILERA

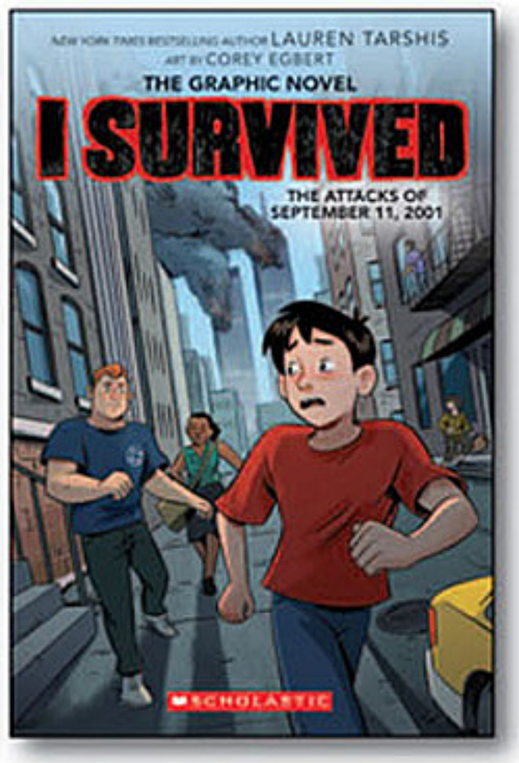
IS A COMIC ILLUSTRATOR AND COLORIST BASED IN JAÈN, SPAIN. HIS WORK CAN BE FOUND IN MORE THAN TWENTY COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS PUBLISHED IN SPAIN, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, AND THE UNITED STATES.

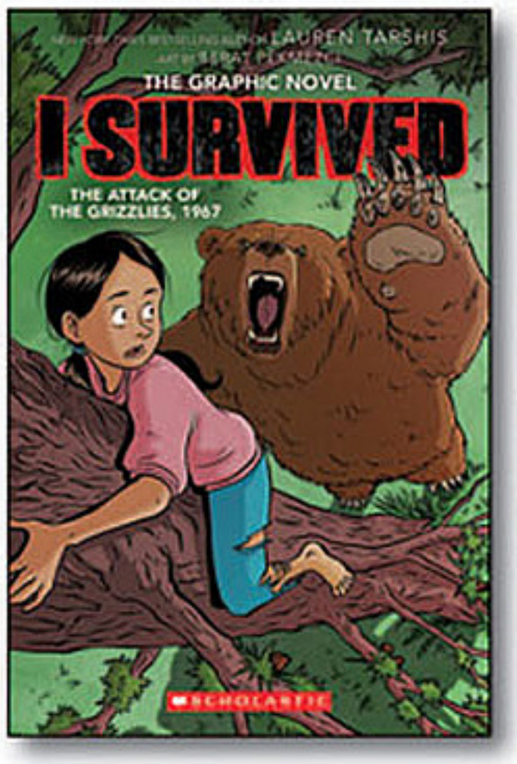
HOW MANY I SURVIVED GRAPHIC NOVELS HAVE YOU READ?

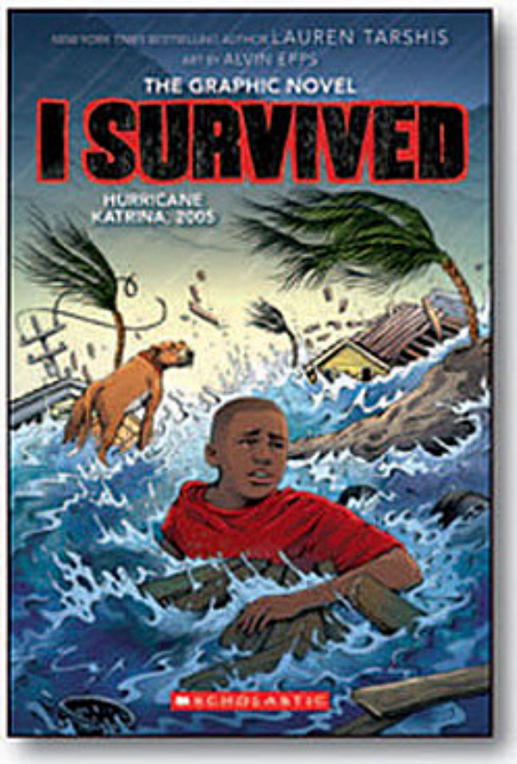


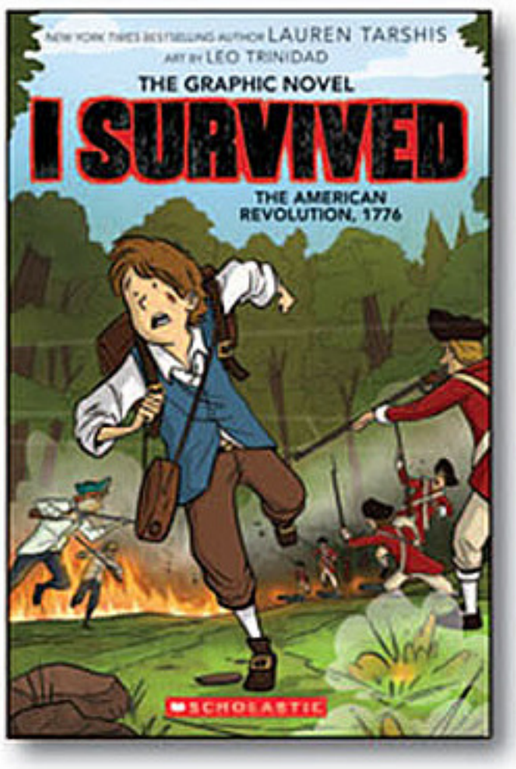


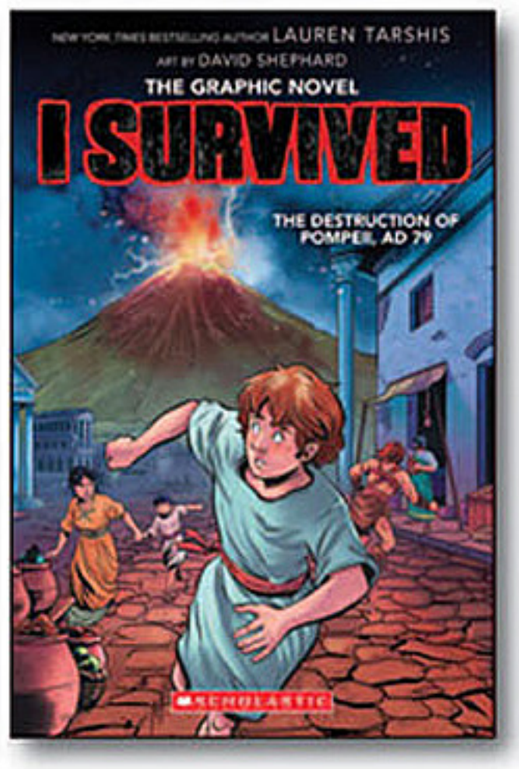












VISIT SCHOLASTIC.COM/ISURVIVED FOR GAMES, VIDEOS, AND MORE!

DISCOVER THE SERIES THAT STARTED IT ALL!

I SURVIVED

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES, HEROES ARE MADE.

I SURVIVED TRUE STORIES

REAL KIDS. REAL DISASTERS.

I SURVIVED

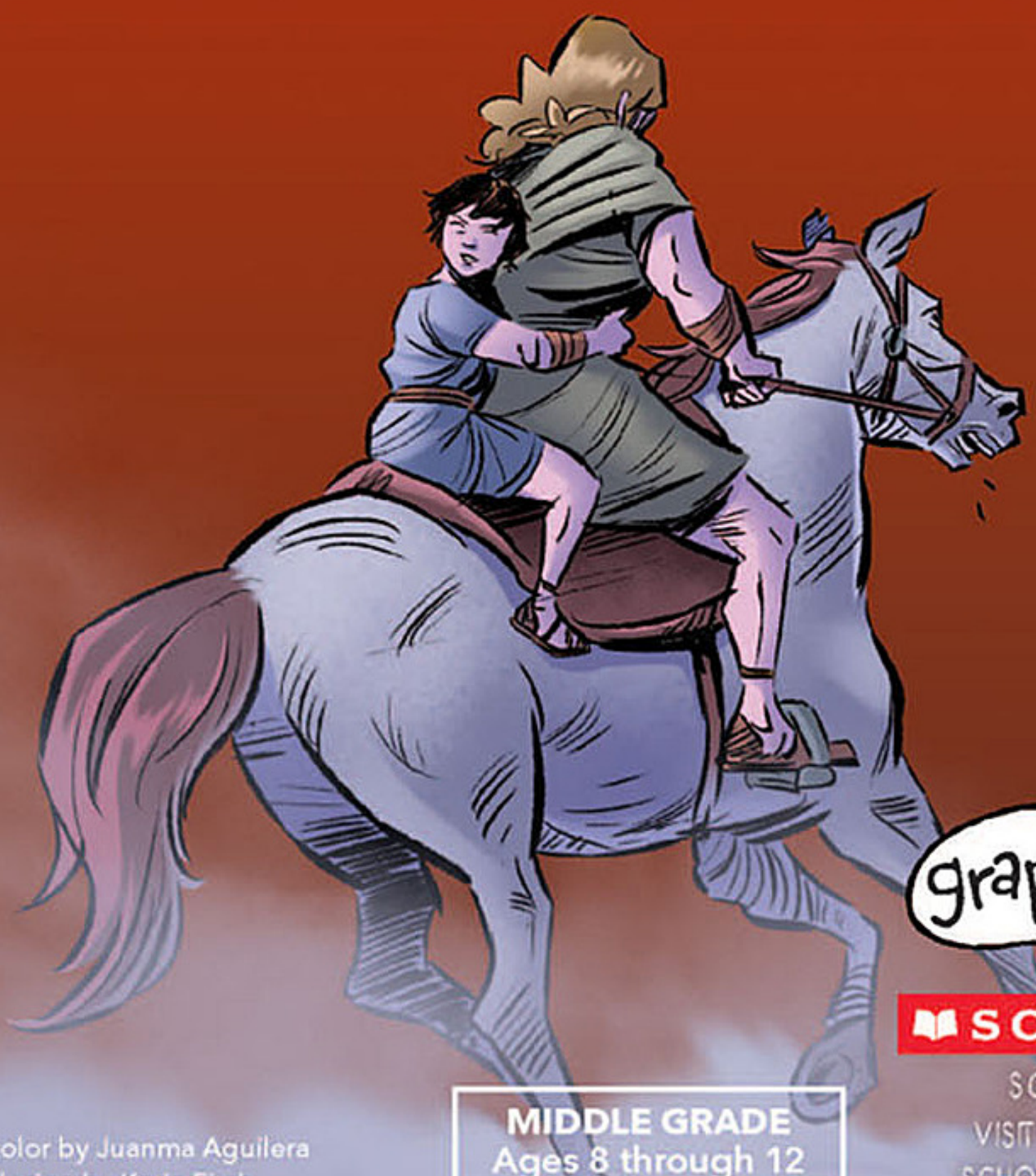
WHEN DISASTER STRIKES, HEROES ARE MADE.

THE BEAST BENEATH THE MOUNTAIN IS RESTLESS . . .

NO ONE IN THE BUSTLING CITY OF POMPEII WORRIES WHEN THE GROUND TREMBLES BENEATH THEIR FEET. THEY FIGURE THAT THE BEAST UNDER THE MOUNTAIN VESUVIUS, HIGH ABOVE THE CITY, WAKES UP ANGRY SOMETIMES—AND ALWAYS GOES BACK TO SLEEP.

BUT MARCUS IS AFRAID. HE KNOWS SOMETHING IS TERRIBLY WRONG—AND HIS FATHER, WHO TRUSTS SCIENCE MORE THAN MYTHICAL BEASTS, AGREES. THOUGH THEY'RE TRYING TO FLEE A DANGEROUS MAN, THEY WANT TO WARN OTHERS ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN. WHEN VESUVIUS EXPLODES INTO A TERRIFYING CLOUD OF ASH, AND ROCKS FALL FROM THE SKY LIKE RAIN, WILL THEY HAVE TIME TO ESCAPE AND SURVIVE THE EPIC DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII?

LAUREN TARSHIS'S *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING I SURVIVED SERIES COMES TO VIVID LIFE IN THIS GRIPPING GRAPHIC NOVEL EDITION.



graphix

AN IMPRINT OF
SCHOLASTIC
SCHOLASTIC.COM
VISIT THE GRAPHIX SITE AT
SCHOLASTIC.COM/GRAPHIX

MIDDLE GRADE
Ages 8 through 12

Cover art by Dave Shephard; color by Juanma Aguilera
© 2024 Scholastic Inc. Cover design by Katie Fitch

DIGITAL
COMICS
PRESERVATION